The COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature the Arts and Public Affairs

FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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CONTENTS

WEEKLY COMMENTS		337
THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE		339
THE CALL FOR THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY	*Louis J. A. Mercier*	345
INDIVIDUAL SOCIALISM	*William Everett Cram*	348
AFTER THE CRISIS (*Verse*)	*Anna McClure Sholl*	350
DEBATING THE OUTSTRETCHED HAND	*Charles Owen Rice*	351
VIEWS AND REVIEWS	*Michael Williams*	353
COMMUNICATIONS		354
POINTS AND LINES: *Who Supports Rearmament? "Playing with Loaded Dies"*		356
THE STAGE	*Grenville Vernon*	358
THE SCREEN	*Philip T. Hartung*	358
BOOKS OF THE DAY		359
MORE ABOUT BOOKS	*The Sampler*	362
THE INNER FORUM		363

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The "Nation" *Citation of* THE COMMONWEAL

WE ARE very pleased that the *Nation* lists THE COMMONWEAL on its "Honor Roll for 1938," but also, perhaps rather ungraciously, concerned over the interpretation that may be put on this friendly citation by the chief supporters of the *Nation* and by groups of American Catholics. Michael Williams expresses some of the reservations of any Catholic who sees the somewhat-left-of-Social Democrat press persisting in a technique similar to that of Father Coughlin, that is, talking about "good Catholics" and "bad Catholics." This policy either breeds plain anti-Catholicism, or spreads the wholly false notion that the division of American Catholics into income groups divides them on general religious, political and economic matters along class war lines, with the hierarchy and clergy in a different division from the "rank and file."

Friendly Gesture

Undoubtedly among Catholics degrees of contentment with present social conditions are influenced by relative income. Catholic priests and bishops, however, do not fit at all into any such classification, and, as Michael Williams says, such division on issues like those presented by President Roosevelt is a false and frivolous charge. There are limits to our social reactions which all Catholics happily have laid down for them by their bishops. The unity which binds together all members of the Catholic Church under the authority of the bishops completely transcends any question of income or political platform.

Therefore we would have wished that the generous citation of THE COMMONWEAL, "for giving expression to the democratic loyalties of rank-and-file American Catholics," had left out that melancholy qualification. We know, and more and more leaders of American democracy are expressing the fact that they know, that democracy depends on religion. The bishops are successors of the Apostles, spreading and preserving the religion from which we draw our social principles. It is encouraging that the *Nation* finds we have done something to be noticed in applying these principles to the complex necessities of today. Many of our secondary ends are the same; as long as our primary ends differ there are bound to be reservations on both sides, even when we see the *Nation* taking an intelligent lead in work for reforms we believe required by social justice. We know that some fellow Catholics who differ sharply with us about the best methods to combat the spread of atheistic communism and to advance social justice will cry louder havoc, but we feel insulated by our purpose and by other citations which the *Nation* has made of Catholics, of President Roosevelt among the others this year, last year of Cardinal Mundelein. It is perhaps conceivable that the *Nation,* in some sinister way, is designing to use THE COMMONWEAL as a tool to upset the Catholic laity. We know of no good reason to think so. Although the philosophy it mostly expresses is unquestionably Marxian, it is not the organ of a party and it gives no signs of coming under Stalinist or any other Communist discipline. But in any case, it would be more serious to be governed by ill-will than occasionally to be duped. And we, or THE COMMONWEAL, were not born yesterday.

Finally, in THE COMMONWEAL there will be found by communists, liberals and conservatives, non-Catholics, lay people and the hierarchy, a loyalty both to American democracy and to the whole Church which is the motivation for its publication. For ourselves, we do not question the motive of the *Nation,* but recognize the necessity in America for good-will even between those with most contradictory religious and philosophical beliefs and temporal purposes. We welcome [illegible] as a recognition of [illegible]

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American City Finances

TOO MUCH attention to the venalities of local politics and powerful city machines tends to conceal the degree of administrative efficiency attained in a number of American cities. In the "prosperous" times of yesteryear lavish or dishonest expenditure of city funds might continue for years, but it is impeded now by the pressure of increasing relief loads. All this is evident in a survey of various cities recently published in the New York *Times*. One of the most successful from a strictly cash revenue point of view is traditionally conservative Boston, where reduction of non-vital city services is proving highly successful. Atlanta and New York report better finances reflecting improved business conditions, the former ending the year with sinking fund requirements of the next year met for the first time since 1913, the latter reporting the best real estate tax collections in forty years. Even Chicago can point to another substantial shaving of the public debt, while Cleveland realistically faces the need for higher taxes on account of past borrowings. Confidence in the city fathers of Philadelphia is manifested in the market for city bonds despite a rapidly increasing deficit. Higher taxes seem the only solution for a milder version of the same situation in St. Louis. Despite a record high in homebuilding, Baltimore faces lower tax receipts and higher welfare demands; it has convened its special commission for the first time in fifteen years. If cities such as these are typical of the country as a whole, the present recovery wave is very spotty indeed, and more efficient municipal administration is one more blessing we can trace to the depression.

Balancing Local Budgets

New York May Check Highway Advertising

IT SEEMS likely that the current session of the New York State Legislature will enact some form of control of advertising along the state highways, and this for two reasons. The Park Commissioner, Mr. Robert Moses, heads the group pushing for such legislation, on grounds trenchantly indicated by the title of their pamphlet: "The Billboard, a Blot on Nature and a Parasite on Public Improvements"; and experience inclines one trustfully to believe that whatever the Park Commissioner wants, he will sooner or later get. Defeated in his effort last year to embody billboard restriction in the state constitution, he returns to the attack with an impressive backing of civic groups. The second reason for expecting speedy action is pointed out by Governor Lehman in his inaugural address: "the great volume of traffic which may reasonably be [illegible] through the state because of the World's Fair, and the prospective increase of billboard structures." In truth, a measure for clearing the New York roadsides cannot be called premature. It must also be remembered that state highways are part of the great trunks of national traffic, state boundaries are down for vaster multitudes of motorists every year. It is inevitable that some form of fairly uniform law will finally be worked out—perhaps in accord with the plans of the American Automobile and the American Planning and Civic Associations, which define a protected strip amply bordering each main highway, subject to state restrictions and permissions.

Bounding the Billboard

Civilian Flyers Have Successful Meet

FOR A decade American economy has been declining, and the worst thing about the decline is that it makes people unhappy. We go further astray seeking happiness, and instead of vitalizing the rest of the world, we add to its burdens. The psychological situation is, in general, deplorable. Fortunately, it is not altogether general. In some places and in some industries, there have all through the depression been clearly defined demands and objectives (not ultimate, perhaps, but deep enough to pacify the personalities concerned), and work in these areas has been logical and productive. The "All American Air Maneuvers" in Miami signalized a good many of the good things about aviation. The moral problems already presented by the child industry did not gather at the rendezvous. The mass civilian flight and the stunts went off with no casualties and not even an accident. The labor troubles which have shadowed some of the factories and transport lines were quite lost from view. It was a triumph of more or less amateur activity and the romantic and thoroughly refreshing appeal of a pioneering industry was with purity satisfied. No plane carried bomb racks, and no propeller was synchronized with a machine gun. Let us enjoy sensitively the eleventh annual All American Air Maneuvers, for American aviation seems destined to have a tragically short youth.

Joy to Our Youth

Vulgar Ritual Points to Real Anomaly

ASSOCIATIONS formed for no purpose whatever, or for a purpose so special that it requires a flair for the more far-flung efforts of fancy—as, to dine on pemmican and Chinese eggs once a year, to find the Merovingian heir to the French throne, to memorize the works of Erasmus Darwin—these may be viewed on the whole with approval. But, after hesitating over the matter, we finally conclude that the recently formed organization to combat the mother-in-law tradition does not qualify. For

The Mothers-in-Law Joke

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its purpose is serious—indeed, it has filed with the New York County Clerk in token thereof—and this disqualifies it. The ladies (themselves daughters-in-law) who wish to put a stop to "harsh and vulgar mother-in-law jokes" show an admirably generosity of spirit; but they do not, it seems to us, understand the true function of these jokes—often very sorry and unfair gibes indeed. They do not, if we may say so, really understand the human race. The human race is above all ritualistic. What it cannot deal with purely literally and rationally, it deals with by ritual—often the ritual of song, oftener the ritual of humor. It was the late G. K. Chesterton, always able to fix the most fleeting truth, who pointed out that though mothers-in-law are frequently loved and honored, they represent in idea an anomaly: a relationship that is neither one thing nor another. It is this anomaly which is signalized and saluted by the mother-in-law joke; and though some children-in-law may observe Mother-in-Law Day (said to be fixed for February 7) because they want to, and others because they are ashamed not to, the joke itself will probably last as long as the relationship.

The President's Message A Symposium

THE PRESIDENT'S annual message to Congress this year was of such interest and importance that THE COMMONWEAL has sounded out a group of American Catholic observers, many of them contributing editors. We quote their replies.

Religion

BY FAR the most radically important thing said by President Roosevelt in his address on the state of the Union was what he had to say concerning religion as the primal, indeed the unique source of human liberties—and, hence, of the highest values associated with our form of government. Indeed, I think it the most important thing said by any secular statesman in modern times. It differed essentially, it seems to me, from the pious platitudes and conventional appeals to religious sentiment used by so many politicians and publicists, but really having little save a purely sentimental relation to the realities of government or economics. So far as my own newspaper reading shows, among the commentators only Walter Lippmann and Dorothy Thompson recognized the high significance of the President's utterance. But I think that its recognition as an epoch-marking public paper will come, for I believe that a great part of our population, Protestants, Jews and Catholics, and many upholders of the western traditions of society—which depend upon the truth proclaimed so admirably by Mr. Roosevelt for their preservation—are uniting in a common consciousness of the practical value of what too long has been relegated to private as distinct from public life and interests.

MICHAEL WILLIAMS.

THERE is one aspect of President Roosevelt's message to Congress which, in view of the discussion engendered by other salient points, is apt to be overlooked. This was his ringing assertion regarding America's determination to preserve its essential freedoms and, in particular, that which guarantees freedom of worship. Again, the President indicated the importance of America continuing to be a God-loving people. In this he aligned himself with those forces which, now scattered though they may be, are increasing in influence and effectiveness, and which, emphasizing that man's happiness cannot lie in material things, must be based on faith in God.

Our people today are becoming more and more alert to the true meaning of the world's ideologic struggle and all the factors involved therein. They are more rapidly appreciating the fact that dictatorships of any ilk are basically alike in their attempt not to wean but to tear their subjects away from God. No dictatorship can survive if those under it can appeal to an Authority Which is supreme. This is the only explanation for the totalitarian governments' first attack on religion. And whereas we are not immediately threatened with such a course in this country, one of the first precautions which Americans must take is that of vigilance. Hence, it was a very happy circumstance which led the President to embody such an assertion of liberty in an address which went beyond an American to a world audience.

JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI,
Secretary, Temple of Religion, N. Y. World's Fair.

"THE DEFENSE of religion, of democracy and of good faith among nations is all the same fight. . . . God-fearing democracies which observe the sanctity of treaties and good faith . . . cannot safely be indifferent to international lawlessness anywhere." To some people, though apparently not to American press commentators in general or to Mr. Chamberlain and his controlled radio, this is the kernel of the most significant portion of the President's message of January 4. For in these phrases, and in the context, where religion is declared to be "the source of . . . democracy and international good faith," the President not only strikes at the heart of totalitarian philosophy, but reclaims for this country, after twenty years, the moral leadership which Woodrow Wilson gave to it. Moreover, this linking of religion and philosophy to politics, so lacking in recent times, is in line with the conclusion of such great experts on government as Morley and Bryce that "the building up of the inward man . . . is the problem of problems." If really followed out, in both foreign and domestic policy, it would offer the best possible basis for that "united patriotism" which is essential to the nation's strength.

H. C. F. BELL,
Professor of History.

THE PRESIDENT'S theology in regard to the relationship of religion and democracy seems surer and sounder than his political economy. His little sermon on belief in God as the basis of the rights of man could have been preached in a Catholic pulpit. In effect he says,

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"Now there remain these three, religion, democracy, international good faith, and the greatest of these is religion." He declares that without religion the other two of the "three institutions indispensable to Americans" could not exist. It is refreshing to hear such a challenge to the totalitarian dogma that the State is absolute, infinite and a law unto itself.

The totalitarian formula, "Nothing outside the State," seems to connote "Nothing above the State." If the State is subject to no Higher Power, if it knows no "Thou shalt" or "Thou shalt not," the door is wide open to Caesarism, and Caesarism recognizes no "inalienable" rights of the citizen.

These things are trite in our theology but it is good that the President has proclaimed them as if they were startling new discoveries. They are not new; they should not be startling, but they are vastly important.

REV. JAMES M. GILLIS, C.S.P.,
Editor, The Catholic World.

THE MESSAGE which President Roosevelt read before Congress on January 4 is important because of its emphasis on the fundamental necessity of religion. It is easy to be satisfied with generalities when opinions are so diverse that almost any definite stand on fundamentals is certain to offend someone, and the message is inspiring simply because it omits such generalities. It states unequivocally that the religion of the individual is the basis of a just society. It seems evident that we cannot have the kind of society we want until each individual recognizes his personal dependence on God and realizes that he is bound to respect his neighbor because his neighbor is also a child of God—but such a statement is not often made by heads of governments.

Right now there is division of opinion over many of the President's proposals. We do not all see alike, but we certainly want to remain free to express our different opinions. That is why this reemphasis on the importance of religion for each of us will be of more far-reaching importance than any suggested ways or means of reform, for it reminds us that our legitimate desire for freedom can only be fulfilled provided our diversities rest on a common foundation of mutual respect.

WILLIAM M. AGAR,
Headmaster, Newman School.

MUCH in the President's message will be fiercely debated. But it is to be hoped that his statement of the basic relation of religion to our form of democracy will be accepted for the clarifying and supremely important truth that it is. It is also to be hoped that those of us who already accept it will not be so absorbed in its possible effect on those who do not, as to neglect our own first, vital connection with it. For that a truth emerging so surely and irresistibly in the long view of history, is so often obscured in the short view, is a tragedy for which believers themselves must take their share of blame. Christians outside the democratic dispensation may not realize that, though the Church underwrites no one policy, to the extent that democracy follows and embodies in the secular field those affirmations of the worth of man which she makes first in the spiritual, it is her direct heir and co-worker. With such graver results, Christians inside may neglect, in selfishness or apathy, those very objectives which their government derives from their religion. The President's words, placing the truth in the exciting context of world politics, should furnish a new reminder to our private consciences.

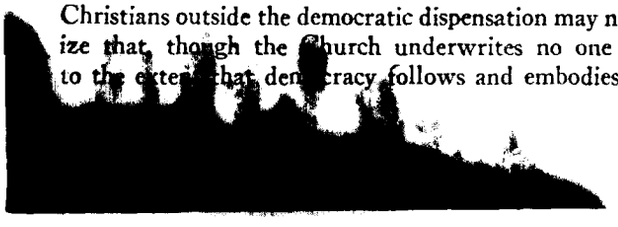
MARY KOLARS,
Editor, St. Anthony Guild Press.

THAT no man is fit to be the judge of his own cause is a cardinal principle in every society which pretends to vindicate private rights by means not of force but of reason. Disputants are disabled by self-interest to judge the right where their own lives, liberties and property are in issue. For principles of decision, disputants themselves look to their separate inclinations. On the contrary, a disinterested person, a judge, looks for rules of decision to the tenets of universal reason, as concreted in statute and authority. When he delivers judgment he implicitly says: "Through me speak not my own passions, inclinations or interests. All non-rational forces have been silenced. In the order of eternal and universal justice I resolve this dispute thus—."

Eternal and universal justice is a mockery if there be no God. On such a mad assumption eternal and universal justice would be less substantial than a perfumed wind. All profound implications contained in the judiciary would become manifest shams. The ideal of judgment would then become as contemptible as some academic critics of the judiciary in this country hold it to be and logically, every political system would in time become as openly partizan as it now is in totalitarian states abroad.

The definitive corruption in principle or in fact of a judiciary based on a philosophy of godlessness is a reproduction in miniature of the corruption which this same godlessness inexorably engenders on an enormous scale in the entire life of a whole nation expressing itself politically through its legislative, administrative and executive officers. This godlessness, in the nature of things, must stir up class against class and nation against nation. Individuals must cease to count as centers of infinite value. The working out of life as a struggle between sleepless relentless savages may be gradual but it cannot be prevented because if there be no God there is nothing but an ephemeral sentimentalism or treacherous fear to limit the appetites that set men at one another's throats. God's existence and God's Law immanent in human society are the sole source, justification and explanation of moral facts. "Deny God," Lord Acton said, "and whole orders of deeper morality fall to the ground."

President Roosevelt has shown the people of this nation and of the whole world the truly remarkable penetration of his thought and the exquisitely sound perceptiveness with which he is endowed by stating clearly the relation of filiation between religion, democracy and international good-will. His magnificent speech on the state of the nation may hereafter prove the Roosevelt equivalent for the "Gettysburg address."



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An organic spiritual society in this country is feasible only on condition that the thought expressed by the President captures both our hearts and our minds.

JAMES N. VAUGHAN,
Secretary to Mr. Surrogate Delehanty, New York.

IN HIS message to the 76th Congress, President Roosevelt spoke not only for the nation but for the whole of mankind. For humanity today is at the crossways: either backward into the night of pagan barbarism wherein God and man are plunged into slavery; or forward to the realization of man's dignity on every plane of his existence, spiritual as well as material. The fulfilment of man's essence is the deepest meaning of democracy. And democracy, as the President pointed out, has its source in religion.

This same truth was recently expressed by Pope Pius XI in his Apostolic Letter of October 12, 1938, to the American hierarchy: "Christian teaching alone, in its majestic integrity, can give full meaning and compelling motive to the demand for human rights and liberties because it alone gives worth and dignity to human personality. In consequence of his high conception of the nature and gifts of man, the Catholic is necessarily the champion of true human rights and the defender of true human liberties; it is in the name of God Himself that he cries out against any civic philosophy which would degrade man to the position of a soulless pawn in a sordid game of power and prestige, or would banish him from membership in the human family; it is in the same Holy Name that he opposes any social philosophy which would regard man as a mere chattel in the commercial competition for profit, or would set him at the throat of his fellows in a blind, brutish class struggle for existence."

Catholics who are nourished by the source itself of democracy and international good faith should be in the forefront in working for man's rights and liberties. With the President we can say, "To us much is given, more is expected." There are some today who are muddying the source itself with national and race hatreds, and by so doing they are not only harming religion but democracy and international good faith.

EMMANUEL CHAPMAN,
Professor of Philosophy.

THE PRESIDENT'S message at the opening of the 76th Congress is not only theoretically based on sound philosophical principles but is also practically in accord, in the opinion of this writer, with the deepest moral aspirations of all men. It is and, if I may say so, will remain a manifesto of political theory comparable in significance to those upon which our political structure has rested for the past century and a half. In calling our attention to the underlying foundations upon which our American form of government stands and in insisting upon their preservation as the only guarantee of our political rights President Roosevelt has shown himself not only to be the statesman which indisputably he is but also a thinker whose range of vision extends beyond the limits of social and political exigencies.

In his attack on the dictators he went to the very metaphysical roots of the question of human rights and exposed in simple and straightforward terms the false philosophy which has given rise to their respective opportunisms. Knowing as he does the psychology of the American people as a whole and how inimical such a mind is to the reception of these ideologies, at any rate in their foreign dress, he made it clear, nevertheless, that he was well aware of the peril in which western civilization will find itself unless practical measures are taken to stem the tide of brute force which they engender. A political philosophy based on the idea that "Might is right" cannot endure but history has shown, if rational argument does not convince, that it can last long enough to undo what centuries of constructive thought and effort have built. The plain truth of the matter is that man is a rational animal whether or not he will admit it in his theoretic philosophy. As such his thinking is bound to guide him in his actions. When the sound rational and common-sense realism of Aristotle and Saint Thomas Aquinas was abandoned in modern times in favor of idealistic dialectic, communism, fascism and nazism, if not consciously implied, were actually in embryo.

We would do well in this connection to reconsider the comments of Walter Lippmann on the President's address in the *Herald Tribune* of January 7. The message, he says, "expresses a philosophy, as new to the President as it is new to the world that heard it, a philosophy which formulates in outline the positive answer of the West to the forces which threaten to destroy the western world."

DANIEL C. WALSH,
Professor of Philosophy.

IN THOSE few short sentences in which the President reminded us that religion must be the source of democracy and international peace, the President went to the very heart of the troubles that vex the world today. I agree with Walter Lippmann that those words are "an event in modern history comparable, so to speak, with the Communist manifesto of 1848. For in that manifesto there were anticipated and propounded the principal ideas which have been dissolving the structure of western society; this message contains within it, by implication and in embryo, the outline of that reconstruction in their moral philosophy which the democracies must undertake if they are to survive."

The President is to be congratulated in that he has so clearly envisioned and so plainly stated this most fundamental truth, at the time when it is most needed.

THOMAS F. WOODLOCK,
Contributing Editor, Wall Street Journal.

Democracy

THERE is much to criticize in the President's message; there is even much that may give rise to justifiable suspicions as to his future national and international intentions. But perhaps we may pardon this sort of thing in what remains basically a politically conditioned document. In my opinion the best part of the message is that which clearly states one of the primary tasks of this nation: the attainment of national security and prosperity through

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free and democratic procedures. Oppressive and dictatorial régimes indeed seem to have solved for themselves the problem of coordinating their various resources with a view to producing the most efficient possible results. But this has been done, as Mr. Roosevelt recognizes, by a materialistic inversion of values. Internal freedom and international justice have been disregarded to an extent which cannot be morally defended. Against these methods, the President holds that material well-being can be achieved in this country by other means. The test and task of democratic institutions in America are clearly set forth: to procure genuine national prosperity, not by denying spiritual values but by reaffirming the great principles, by exemplifying in action the primacy of the spiritual values of freedom and justice, which are the only sound basis for improvement of all phases of our national life.

WILLIAM O'MEARA,
Professor of Philosophy.

THE PRESIDENT'S message to Congress swept over the nation and the world like a draft of fresh air into a caved-in mine. Hence the praise bestowed by the press on its statement of principles. Catholics saw in them their convictions powerfully proclaimed: "The defense of religion, of democracy, and of good faith is all the same fight. To save one we must make up our mind to save all."

But how is religion to be saved? Catholics have steadfastly maintained their right and their duty to do it through their schools, with a consequent annual gift to the nation of over $135,000,000. What do others propose to do in the same necessary way?

As to economic ills, their cure through piling-up debts remains dubious, as the President himself believed a few years ago. But if he used his eloquence to make business men realize that their own advantage is in social justice, and assured them that the government earnestly wishes to cooperate with them to stimulate private enterprise ethically conceived, the resulting confidence could work wonders.

To save religion, we must teach religion. To shame despotisms, democracy must become efficient through the mutual good-will and united effort of government, capital and labor.

LOUIS J. A. MERCIER,
Professor of French and Author.

THE WHOLE world is endebted to Mr. Roosevelt for his eloquent and courageous affirmation of basic relationships between religion, democracy and international good faith. Too long has our own national tradition been infected without challenge by our Founding Fathers' Deistic suspicion of organized religion. And too long have nations depended upon "scraps of paper" to sustain international good faith. Neither of these attitudes has been found sufficient to guarantee either the minimal requirements of human freedom in society, or peace and prosperous commerce between nations. The day of reckoning for America has been mercifully postponed but fortunate we are in having a leader and prophet to warn us of the handwriting on the wall.

It remains to be seen what implementation will be given the President's high message. We must confess that its second part seemed to be confined to tinkering with the same old pot. Of course, we recognize that there must be short-range as well as long-range objectives. In due course we may be provided with a long-range program, some parts of which, to be sure, may be outside the purview of the federal government. As essential points in such a program we see *restoration* of religious instruction to our public schools; the fostering of state-supported confessional schools to parallel our Catholic school system to be likewise supported by the state; the exchange of diplomatic representatives between the United States and Vatican City as part of a plan to ensure an important place for the Holy See at the council tables of the nations. The Papacy is uniquely situated in these times to provide disinterested God-fearing counsel, since it is a sovereign state with practically no economic interests.

HARRY MC NEILL,
Professor of Psychology.

SOME parts of the President's three messages of last week must awaken echoes of pleasure in American consciences. It is good to see religion credited with its proper place and function as first source of the two other ideals to be defended by America, democracy, and good faith among nations. Sympathy must be general for the thesis that a citizenry happily employed to capacity and a larger national income are excellent means for keeping these ideals valued.

Other parts of the messages give rise to doubt, confusion and controversy. Historically speaking, the interrelation of democratic governments, freedom of religion and fulfilment of international obligations is by no means so close as the annual message might seem to imply.

But most of the confusion rises over the budget and relief messages, and over the exact direction of foreign policy. The undercurrent of alarm in the annual message can be variously construed as a reflection of the November elections, as preparation of the voters for a third term campaign, or as a sincere and earnest statement of the necessity for internal unity in defense of traditional ideals against an increase of the forces in other lands opposed to them. It is somewhat difficult to reconcile the idea of good faith in government with either the quarrel over which politicians shall administer relief, or the seeming abandonment of any idea of even an attempt to balance the budget for the remainder of the President's term. References to capital "prepared for peace or war," and to the New Deal as a period of extensive preparedness, cause the citizen to ask whether the asserted economic improvement be not a product of "rearmament," whether all of the "rearmament" be necessary and whether this "rearmament" be not really a widespread preparation for an expected war. The economic boycott against "aggressors," the possibility of defining "aggression" and the modification of neutrality legislation are specters risen again to "hant" congressmen.

ELIZABETH M. LYNSKEY,
Catholic Association for International Peace.

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NO CATHOLIC—in fact, no religious person of any faith—could fail to be impressed by the spotlight President Roosevelt threw upon religion in his first message to Congress last week. If, as he pointed out, it is the source and foundation of democracy and of international good faith, its preservation becomes the primary end of good government and good citizens.

American Catholics might well thank God that in a country as intensely non-Catholic and non-religious as the United States such a sound concept should exist in the mind of our President—if nowhere else.

At any rate, it is a concept right down the alley of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, which is certainly dedicated to the ordering of the American labor movement along lines consistent with man's final destiny, which is God.

To reach this ordering we must build a sound structure of industrial democracy. The Wagner Act has been a good beginning to the government's share in this job. But we could wish that the President had mentioned the crying need for capital and labor to get together in each industry and profession to work out the permanent machinery and technique of a sensible self-government—à la papal encyclicals.

JOHN CORT,
Executive Secretary, A.C.T.U.

Budget

THE MOST fundamental part of the message is contained and implied in the President's references to religion, democracy and international good faith. The President did not overstress the value and far-reaching influence of these institutions.

The most immediately important statement in the message was the proposal to continue government spending in order to stimulate business and prevent a reversal of the recent upward trend. This proposal is absolutely sound economically, ethically and politically. As the President said, "We have learned that it is unsafe to make abrupt reductions at any time in our net expenditure program." We have learned that from the deplorable effects which followed the President's curtailment of the spending program in the latter part of the year 1936 and the early part of the year 1937.

Despite all bluffing about balancing the budget, Congress will not run the risk of checking the present business upturn by any serious reduction in federal spending. Nor will it greatly curtail expenditures for the relief of the unemployed.

RT. REV. JOHN A. RYAN,
Director, Social Action Department, N.C.W.C.

IN A REPUBLIC indifference to public affairs on the part of the citizenry constitutes a danger for which a sound remedy is dynamic executive leadership. Whether one is a critic or friend of Mr. Roosevelt one must admit that he has fixed the interest of the people upon their government through effective use of the rostrum and the microphone. His message before the new Congress was one of his most successful efforts. On domestic affairs he stands by his spending program and, to my way of thinking, does well in challenging the economy champions to name specifically their economies. There is scarcely a corporal's guard in Congress that is agreed on where economy should begin or end. On foreign affairs his pronouncements unquestionably reflected American public opinion. It is high time that some one in authority join the Supreme Pontiff in condemnation of the system under which modern international marauders live, move, and have their being. It should, too, be a matter of no little satisfaction to Catholics that the executive of the most powerful state in the world recognizes the importance of religion as the foundation of ordered domestic and international civilization. Unfortunately, we are called to arm, but can anyone who *knows* the world situation today deny the necessity for it?

JEROME G. KERWIN,
Professor of Political Science.

EACH one of President Roosevelt's messages to Congress contains a very imaginative new viewpoint. The idea of internal preparedness and the idea of budgeting for national capital outlay are destined to make history. They both point toward a deeper appreciation of the democracy which is in the making in this country.

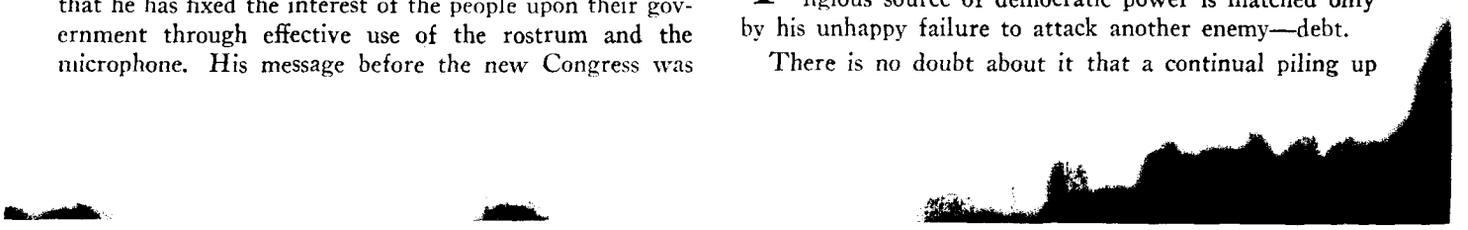
Whether we agree with the Chief Executive's contention that the last six years constitute an unprecedented advance toward internal preparedness, there can be no doubt that in a democracy the mutual affection and loyalty of the whole people constitute the decisive factor where support cannot be forced. It must be everyone's fervent hope that this internal preparedness is not lost sight of in the agitation over armament. More particularly must we beware lest essential elements in our present social policies be sacrificed in order to spend on purely military preparedness. Everyone will concede the importance of the latter; but should we not heed the warning of what has happened to England and France? There were plenty of arms but internal preparedness was lacking in the hour of need.

Budgeting for capital outlay has become a crying need. The development of recent years has obliged the government to step into the breach left by a crumbling private capital structure. It is absurd that we should expect to finance such capital outlays by current income; no large business enterprise can or does do this. We talk about balancing the budget without knowing what our budget actually is; how much goes into permanent improvements to be amortized over a period of years. Budgeting for capital outlay is a happy phrase describing the common task in which Congress, the President and the people are jointly engaged in planning for the future of our country.

CARL J. FRIEDRICH,
Professor of Government.

THE PRESIDENT'S splendid reassertion of the religious source of democratic power is matched only by his unhappy failure to attack another enemy—debt.

There is no doubt about it that a continual piling up



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of indebtedness, either public or private or combined, and of "investment" based on debt, is putting the whole capitalistic system more and more on a "margin" basis, with the perils that are inherent in a margin system of any kind.

If a man tells you he can only make his everlasting fortune by speculating on a margin, you know just about where he will end up. If the only way we can become an eighty billion dollar country is by increasing our debt (or "margin") operations, then we might as well collapse now as later.

The only real salvation for capitalism, and the only way to become permanently an eighty billion dollar country, lies in more and more equity investment, more ownership, more "risks" and less dictatorship of debt. The job of government should be to encourage the creation of conditions favorable to this equity, or debtless, investment. But the head of our government is not yet a champion of this most democratic of good works. And good works we need, as well as flaming faith!

R. DANA SKINNER,
Specialist in Financial Research.

Foreign Affairs

THE PRESIDENT'S message to Congress was a heartening, even inspiring affirmation of the principles of true democracy. But puzzling, to say the least, is the President's statement of foreign policy at the beginning of the message. A dispatch emanating from London last month asserted with solemn seriousness that the issue between Germany and England, which had been recognized even a year ago as simply an economic issue, is rapidly becoming a moral issue. There is a tinge of this same Pecksniffian approach in the President's address, apparent chiefly in the calm assumption of the rôle of moral judge over foreign nations. Implicit in the message is that familiar division of nations and parties into bad and good, black and white, fascist and democrat, which has confused too much the political issues of our day. Naïveté has been notoriously an outstanding characteristic of American foreign policy. Granted that America as one of the family of nations has a duty toward the securing of world peace and welfare, we hope nevertheless that the awareness of that duty will not lead again to an adventure in chestnut-pulling.

DANIEL J. SULLIVAN,
Professor of Philosophy.

THE PRESIDENT preaches peace and preparedness and ignores the fact that we are supplying the munitions and machinery of war to the aggressor nations against whom he says we must protect ourselves. In vague rhetoric he says that we should not "assist or build up an aggressor" and yet he does not raise his voice against the anomaly of our building up enemies to defend ourselves against. Is peace, like war, to become a great economic enterprise? And is fear of foreign dictators to be used as a means of distracting attention from the unsatisfactory solutions of internal problems? Certainly these questions are suggested by the President's recent speeches.

Mr. Roosevelt also suggests one legitimate question: can democracy achieve the internal unity—economic and political—which dictatorships achieve? This is one of the most important questions in practical politics today. The President's speeches may be interpreted to indicate that he believes one means of attaining this internal unity in the United States is to concentrate on the "dangers from without," and to chant the magic words, "democracy," "religious freedom" and "international good faith." Such a technic, like some other New Deal policies, is too artificial to have enduring effects.

RUTH BYRNS,
Professor of Education.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT has expressed dissatisfaction with our neutrality laws, asserting that they "may operate unevenly and unfairly—may actually give aid to an aggressor and deny it to the victim." However true this may be, I am very much opposed to any change or modifiation of governmental policy at this particular time. It would certainly be unwise and imprudent for Congress to sabotage our existing policy of non-intervention regarding the civil war in Spain. Such a complete reversal of policy, at this time, would be interpreted as positive aid to the murderous Red government of Loyalist Spain (wherever its capital may temporarily happen to be when this is published), would postpone the victory of the Christian forces under General Franco, and would involve us in the militaristic maelstrom of European politics. For these reasons, every effort should be made at once to implement the splendid work of the National Council of Catholic Men which has organized a committee to prevent the lifting of the embargo on arms to Spain. The President and members of Congress should be informed now of the view of twenty million American citizens on this issue. KEEP THE SPANISH EMBARGO!

JOHN J. O'CONNOR,
Professor of History and Sociology.

TWENTY years ago after the signing of the Armistice there was a deep sigh of relief in this country and a conviction of heart that never again would there be a great war in which we would participate. We had taken part in the war meant to end all war, and then proceeded to make a peace that threatened to end all peace. Now here is the President of the United States in his official message to Congress warning us that the world seems to be on the brink of the greatest war ever. The wise old Greeks twenty-five hundred years ago had the same experience. During the last twenty years a score of peace prizes have been awarded by the Nobel foundation but peace seems farther off than ever. Manifestly the cure is not in the intellectual order. The President points out that only the inculcation of moral principles through religion can prevent a war which will inevitably engulf civilization. Christianity is appealed to as a preventive. Suppose the world should be asked to try Christianity. We have only pretended to try it so far. Let us see what it can do before the worst comes.

JAMES J. WALSH, M.D.,
Author and Lecturer.

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The Call for the Catholic University

By LOUIS J. A. MERCIER

THE FIRST announcements have come from Washington that this scholastic year is the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the Pontifical Catholic University of America.

University, as opposed to college, instruction is a comparatively recent development. Fifty years ago, there were only 1,290 graduate students in the United States. As late as 1903, only eight non-Catholic universities conferred more than ten doctorates a year. Even today, graduate work of the highest type in all subjects is not readily available. An appraisal of American universities, published three years ago in the *Atlantic,* listed only eleven as eminent, and, of those, only one was starred in all of the twenty-two departments surveyed. Of the other institutions, only four rated excellence in eighteen to twenty-one departments, and the other six in only seven to fourteen.

Though Catholic colleges, because of their humanistic traditions, may be the best in the country, it should be clear, in the light of the above figures, that there can never be many Catholic graduate schools of the highest standing in all fields. It was therefore not strange that the Sovereign Pontiffs, though fully aware of the need of regional institutions, called upon American Catholics to concentrate their efforts so as to build up at least one university that would be recognized as pontifical and national, and mirror in a very special way the highest Catholic scholarship.

It is striking that the vision of the Papacy is so often several generations ahead of its time. As it took us some fifty years to begin to appreciate the labor encyclicals, it may be that it is again only fifty years after the first call of Pope Leo XIII, also most earnestly reiterated by Pope Pius XI, and reinforced recently by the trust of an important task, that we shall become fully Catholic-university conscious. At least, the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of our pontifical university should be the occasion to discuss nationally our need of it, and our relation to its needs.

The Catholic University at Washington, D. C., is now credited with an endowment apparently little more than the original gifts for buildings and chairs which made its foundation possible. Exclusive of tuitions, which are much lower than in most non-Catholic institutions, its annual resources, from the national collection ordered by His Holiness and the contributions of the Friends of the Catholic University have remained very meager.

It has, nevertheless, won the respect of the non-Catholic university world, as shown by its admittance to the Association of American Universities. In recent years, it awarded annually some fifty doctorates, or more than all the non-Catholic universities, except the first eight, did thirty-five years ago. It has been preeminently influential in the foundation and direction of at least three national associations, educational, philosophical and historical, and of their corresponding reviews. It has established other research publications in patristic studies, anthropology, the ecclesiastical sciences, psychology and psychiatry, and oriental patrology. It has five schools of strictly graduate character: the School of Sacred Theology, the School of Canon Law, the School of Philosophy, the School of Social Science, the School of Social Work and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the last with twenty-three departments. It has affiliated over thirty colleges, three hundred high schools and fifty novitiates, with a corresponding upholding of scholastic standards. It has trained several thousand teachers and administrators. More than fifty of its graduates have been made bishops of the Church. It may then be said to have fulfilled the expectations of its first generous founders. The concern of our generation need only be how to give their foundation a new birth of opportunity through a like or even a far broader effort, in keeping with the new exigencies and tremendous responsibilities of Catholic Action in our tragic times.

For never before was it so easy to appreciate how the fate of individual countries depends upon their intellectual and spiritual leadership, or even to see that the fate of the world, humanly speaking, depends upon what will happen in the United States in the next fifty years. In fact, the venerable English philosopher Whitehead did not hesitate to write recently: "The term European civilization is now a misnomer, for the center of gravity of civilization has shifted. . . . The Aegean coastline, Italy, France, England, Germany had their chance and made use of it. Today the Eastern American states have their chance. What use will they make of it?" Whitehead concluded that the use they will make of it depends upon the university.

But what university? Is not what is wanted rather a fellowship of universities? Non-Catholic universities are proud to call themselves liberal, to admit the teaching of all doctrines. We must surely all know the history and content of every doctrine. But unless we give up the hope of ob-

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jective truth or values, the time comes when we must become dogmatic. Complete and continued freedom of thought implies complete and continued ignorance. We must finally adhere to some of the basic alternatives of thought and they are very few. We are all either atheists, pantheists, deists or theists, Christians or non-Christians, Protestants of various denominations or Catholics. We all believe either only in matter or only in spirit, or in both, or in both and in grace, and we have different views as to the dispensation of grace. We may all study physical nature objectively, but when we come to the study of man we cannot help viewing our subject from the fundamental alternative of thought which appeals most to us even if only as a hypothesis.

No non-Catholic university can claim to be truly liberal so long as in addition to its representatives of the other alternatives of thought, it does not have Catholic professors teaching in all branches pertaining to man the Catholic alternative, its understanding of the nature of man, its view of the past and its program for the future. So long as they cannot or will not do this, non-Catholic educators, to be truly liberal in their general outlook for education, must be the first to wish that there be in the country at least one Catholic university sufficiently well-endowed and staffed to keep available a full presentation of Catholic thought as one of the basic alternatives open to the human mind; the more so that, historically, it had such an influence in the shaping of western civilization that all contrary schools are only fully understandable in its light.

On the other hand, if no school of thought can be liberal, if all schools of thought should be adequately represented, and if no non-Catholic university can be counted on adequately to represent Catholic thought, then it devolves upon the Catholics of the United States to see to it that, in the fellowship of American universities on which ultimately the future of the country depends, and, as Whitehead said, even the future of the race, there should be at least one Catholic university equal in prestige among its peers.

The Catholic was the first to proclaim that the conscience of man should not be coerced. In spite of his insistence on the logical need of one communion, he holds that salvation through grace is a matter between the individual and his Maker. If State and Church became so intertwined, at certain periods of history, that heresy or the flaunting of irreligion became a crime against the State, or that the popular indignation in Catholic communities led to intolerance, the Church itself always strove to recall the fundamental law of charity; as it now freely admits that the recognition by the State of its rights as an autonomous society is sufficient to insure the carrying-on of its mission.

Here, in the United States, we need not burden ourselves with the weight of the mistakes and misunderstandings of régimes which are not our own, and under which the Church was never as free as she is with us. Face to face with our common problems, we can fully recognize that no one of us, Catholic or non-Catholic, is personally responsible for the quarrels of the past; and, all recognizing that men can be moved to belief only through intellectual conviction, and to Christian fellowship only through the grace of God, we may all be united, in spite of our differences, through our common wish for one another's good. Hence America's very special opportunity in the crisis of civilization which is upon us, and the very special responsibilities of American Catholics in the matter of Catholic higher education.

MANY non-Catholic scholars are already in sympathy with much of the Catholic outlook. Several have even been foremost in rehabilitating the Catholic Middle Ages, others have accepted our dualistic philosophy, many more wish to know more about our findings, as proved by the invitations to Catholic scholars to lecture in non-Catholic universities. But the more the possibility of cooperation between non-Catholics and Catholics becomes clear, in so far as their thought coincides, the more imperative, again, is it for us that our contributions to knowledge should compare favorably with the non-Catholic output, that we should have the means of viewing critically the research in all fields, whether favorable or unfavorable to us; and that the full range of Catholic thought should in turn be adequately studied and presented.

That there will be excellent regional Catholic universities to help to carry on this task is already assured. That there is room for additional colleges is clear, since more than half of Catholic students are in non-Catholic establishments. But isolated institutions will not give Catholic scholarship the cohesion that it needs; nor can we hope, as already shown, that we can have many universities outstanding in all fields of research, when even non-Catholic resources are unable to secure them. It is significant that the universities listed as the most eminent, outside of the four state-supported universities included, have the largest endowments in the country.

Catholics cannot hope to approach these endowments, at least for a long time, even for one institution, much less for four or five. But they can at least hope to have one institution with an endowment of some ten instead of some three millions by concentrating their national efforts upon it for a few years. And such an endowment under Catholic auspices would be equivalent to much more.

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But aside from the steps which must be taken to attain that object, we should thoroughly realize what it would mean for us to have at least one university which would compare in prestige with the greatest among our non-Catholic institutions. It could be for us what the University of Paris was for the Middle Ages. There were other universities in Europe than Paris, and, without them, Paris would not have been what it was. But the influence of Paris was felt everywhere. Such a university must work like a great heart, generously giving of itself and attracting to itself; sending out and drawing in the life-current of the scholarship of a continent. So should our pontifical and national university focalize the national scholarship of American Catholics. Not only should every religious order be represented on its permanent staff, and every aspect of Catholic thought, but every Catholic scholarly achievement done elsewhere should find there a means of being brought to the national attention.

This is the more necessary in a country which like the United States has no institutions sufficiently representative to bestow national recognition upon outstanding merit. For instance, the function which the various national academies of France, its national schools of music and art, and the chairs of its Collège de France exercise, through their elections and prizes, must here be taken over by some university. To do this it must have visiting lectureships and professorships. They not only confer recognition, but insure that the best current outside production will be brought to its halls. It may be noted that our non-Catholic universities have so understood their duties. It is significant that Whitehead, after stating that the center of civilization had shifted to the Atlantic border, and that the use it made of its opportunity depended upon the university, concluded that it depended to the largest extent upon one in particular. If he could dare to say that, it is no doubt in so far as that particular university avowedly conceives its rôle as that of a national and even international university where every effort must be made to seek out promising students and to bring to a focus the scholarship of the country and of the world. Hence its regional scholarships, its yearly exchange professorships, its constant stream of open lectures by visiting lecturers and its recent featuring of a week's conference of Arts and Sciences, devoted to the study of man, which brought together 105 of the world's greatest scholars from nineteen countries.

A like mission for Catholic scholarship awaits our pontifical and national Catholic university at Washington. It too should have enough fellowships to make it possible for outstanding students from every diocese to come under its influence. It should have visiting lectureships and professorships not only for American but for foreign Catholic scholars, particularly for such men as are able to confront the output in each field with Catholic doctrine. It should be able to make regular provision for conferences between representatives of various schools of thought, such as was lately sponsored by our non-Catholic and Catholic philosophical associations, specially designed to help toward mutual understanding of respective positions, and lead, at least, to a common tabulating of irreducible differences. All this, of course, besides strong permanent faculties, adequately supplied with resources for study and research, since no frequently changing staffs can insure the continuity of effort necessary for the development of the highest scholarship.

Whether our generation can supply the financial resources to insure all this is now the question. When we recall that American Catholics, with 200,000 students in high schools and academies and 2,170,000 in parochial schools, contribute the equivalent of more than $135,000,000 a year to the obligatory education of the country, in addition to their support of public schools, it might well be considered a case of reciprocity if some non-Catholics, recognizing that the very foundation of the rights of the human person at the root of American polity, is historically grounded on Catholic thought, should want to contribute to the endowment of a national Catholic university. Still, our Catholic people must be ready to depend chiefly upon themselves if they want the intellectual prestige and security which such a university, adequately endowed, would increasingly give them. A $10,000,000 endowment would only be equivalent to those of such institutions as Amherst, Brown, Hampton Institute, Rice Institute, Tulane, Vassar, Virginia and Williams; yet it would mean a favorable comparison as to endowment with all but some twenty private institutions in the country.

When we consider the increase in numbers and wealth of our Catholic population in the last fifty years, it is evident that if we could be fired with the same vision for the imperative need of higher learning, and with the same pride in contributing to its support as characterizes our non-Catholic friends, or even some Catholics of the past generation, the Creightons, the Caldwells, the Eugene Kellys, the Patrick B. O'Briens, the John K. Mullins, a new day could easily dawn for Catholic influence.

The fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of our Pontifical Catholic University of America at Washington challenges us to become fully conscious that its needs are only in terms of our need of it as the focusing center of Catholic thought in the United States. It may therefore not be too much to say that so long as we shall not have found a way to equate these needs, we shall be remiss in our duty to ourselves, to the country, and to the Church.

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Individual Socialism

By WILLIAM EVERETT CRAM

AS SEEN from one point of view, the individual in almost all forms of life is a sort of socialistic community. The ego, or boss, trains his lower members to do their work, beginning in childhood, just as the farmer and horse trainer does in the case of ox team and horses, and the skilled workman in earlier generations trained the apprentice under his instruction and guidance. The bull calves, long before they reach the age of yearling steers, are yoked in pairs together and, with calf-size wooden sled or drag hitched to the little wooden yoke, are trained to go ahead, stop short or turn to right or left, and to learn the precise meaning and definition of the words "whoa," "whahish," "gee" and "haw."

The specialist along any particular line, whether he be artist, artizan or factory hand, is hardly to be included in this group. The majority of his members, passing their time, as they do, in idleness, and subsisting on relief which is earned by the few overworked ones, while his own ego is only too often under orders of another above.

The hunter, strolling through the woods, or along marsh trail of seashore line, has his mind absorbed in various problems. Just where did the moose or red deer, fox, or the flight of wild fowl pass the night, and what will be the course they take on starting out this morning? His eyes and ears meanwhile are ever alert and quick to inform him of new-made track in snow or moss, or on the leaf carpet of the woodland floor. The very slightest change in wind direction, as indicated by the bend of spruce and pine tree top, the slant of falling leaf, outline of cloud as glimpsed between the tree tops or along the distant ocean skyline, is instantly signaled to the brain and taken heed of, as is the faintest rustle or crack of twig to windward, honk of wild goose or splash of water round the river's bend.

We train our muscles, as the recruiting soldier is trained for army service. Along the nerves, connecting brain and muscle, speed our orders, and whenever accident or wound in conflict happens, the news is instantly carried back, as over a telephone wire. When the surgeon applies an anesthetic before the operation he is merely disconnecting the wire for the time being with permission of the brain, which, knowing that it can be of no service itself, prefers not to be bothered; just as the business manager on learning that his factory is on fire, with clerks and workmen shrieking for help, passes word along to the fire department and gives orders to have his telephone disconnected so that he might remain undisturbed in his office.

In times of intense concentration these nerves of connection would appear to disconnect themselves. My father's cousin, who was lieutenant in the army in 1865, rode back after one conflict with a bullet wound in his leg, but was absolutely unable to relate when or how it happened. His first consciousness of it was when, feeling that his foot was wet though they had forded no river on that trip, he had looked down and noticed the three-quarter inch hole in his riding boot from which a trickle of blood was oozing.

As a boy I heard one of our neighbors relating to my father how after the death of his wife he had lost all interest in life or in the day's work, and on an autumn day started off for the woods hoping that his hunter's instinct might for a little time at least make him forget his loss—but it failed completely to do so. Then suddenly, as he went brooding on his way, he was startled by a gunshot close at hand and saw a partridge tumble fluttering down among the trees. As he called, "Look out! don't shoot this way," he noticed the smoke curling out from his right gunbarrel, and looking more closely found the right hammer of his muzzle loader down against the nipple, and that the right barrel had been discharged and was warm to his hand. So he picked up his game and started back for home.

In the matter of training the lower members to go right along with their work without orders from above, my father reversed the White Knight's rule: "What does it matter where my body happens to be? My mind goes on working just the same." And only on very rare occasions as, for example, when the off horse stepped over the trace, or some other unexpected occurrence chanced to turn up, did this rule ever get us into trouble. I found it particularly valuable on my hunting excursions, as it enabled me to go on with my studies of natural history and botany perfectly confident that if partridge or wild fowl were flushed, or fox or deer slipped noiselessly away under cover of the undergrowth, my gun would come to my shoulder while my eyes and muscles would direct the sights and pull the trigger without conscious direction from the brain.

The power of mental concentration, though of priceless value in study and laboratory work, is not to be depended on in any form of outdoor occupation, as it almost invariably renders such complete disconnection between mind and muscle. Let us take, for example, the case of the woodchopper, whether he be engaged in thinning out rough and dying trees from among those left

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standing for future growth, or felling here and there tall pine and hardwood. Brain, eyes and ears first work in partnership together. The eyes inform the brain of two or three or more space openings between the surrounding trees and also of wind direction and power, by means of retina image that pictures to the mind the bend of top-most twig as outlined against the sky, and the course of clouds, one strata above another overhead. The ears, meanwhile alert for any sign of change of wind direction, instantly pass word along to the brain of faintest sigh and whisper which might indicate a shift of wind from west to south-southeast.

The chopper then strolls away a dozen or twenty paces, turns about and, with axe helve suspended from his right hand at eye level, with eye and brain in collaboration, estimates, first from one side and then from another, which way, if any, the tree is leaning, and whether to windward or to leeward. Then figuring, by way of experience and observation gained through years of forest work and the advice and instruction of older generation woodsmen, just where his tree may fall without breaking down the younger growth, he proceeds to chop a dead or half-dead log to lay across the spot he has chosen. When working with axe alone, the scarf on the butt first cut into must extend half or five-sixths of the way through, in exact accordance with the various items already mentioned. Then as he chops the opposite scarf, his eye and ear must be alert once more to catch the first slight swing of tree top, and crack of yielding fiber at the stump. Slowly the tree begins to fall and, with eyesight focused on the descending top, he swings his axe, driving its keen cutting edge into the sapwood either on the right or left according to which is holding back the most.

"Down at last with crash and echo mingled, the forest Monarch falls," to rest across the under log.

There is of course some slight danger of injury and death connected with this sort of work. Hour for hour and year by year, I should reckon that it might be estimated at about one against sixty as compared to that of driving or riding in auto or airplane. Wind and weather in both are powerful factors.

A few years ago my son and I were at work in the wood-lot. A tall, slender, narrow-topped pine which I was cutting, stood perfectly erect. That December morning was windless and clear with not a cloud in the sky to prophesy the approach of the northwest wind that started swinging the hemlock boughs just as I had almost finished hacking into my first scarf. Having planned to fell the tree toward the northwest, I took the precaution of cutting a slender hemlock from the leeward to lean against my pine and push it against the wind. It worked all right, but for once absent-mindedness or concentration on my work caused me at just the wrong instant to forget the hemlock, as I watched the pine go crashing down exactly where I had planned it. That hemlock, one of its branches having been broken when it fell against the pine, hit me on the head with a six-inch stub frozen hard by the zero night before; and this six-inch spike punctured my hat and (to a slight extent) my skull, and rendered me unconscious half a second or so. I managed to get on my feet, however, before my son had arrived on the scene. Coming to the conclusion that I had done enough chopping for that morning I started off for home, and at the end of the less than a one mile walk discovered that my flannel shirt was soaked with blood and my hair well clotted. Infection germs have no place in forest sections at that temperature, so I left the clot on my head just as it was, and no infection followed.

THE QUESTION as to just how much freedom in the matter of deciding their own affairs may wisely be granted to our lower members is by no means easy to solve. A friend of mine, whose left leg was seriously injured by a rolling log last week, told me the other night that, after the first few days of treatment, he arrived at the conclusion that with the aid of crutches to support his weight while swinging his right foot forward, he could go about from one room to another. But he failed to take into account the fact that for more than half a century his left foot had been the leader, something which he had been entirely unconscious of before; and, endeavor as he might, he found himself utterly unable to force them to change their ground. His left foot still persisted in taking the first step forward, while the other hung back, both of them obstinately insisting that they would not, at their time of life, be ordered to do anything that they had not been trained to do in early youth.

The mishaps on the highway which occur nowadays are (I should judge from overhearing the interchange of conversation by those involved) as frequently due to hesitation and delay of hand and foot in turning the steering wheel and putting on the brake, as to the opposite extreme of yielding to nervous panic, and doing the wrong thing without orders from above.

Among the so-called lower forms of life (with the exception of ants and honey bees) the muscles, in any emergency, act of their own accord, far more quickly and accurately than with us. The fox and deer, when sound asleep on fallen log, or underneath the drooping fir-tree boughs, is instantly aware of every faintest scent or sound from windward; while among some of them, sheep, rabbits and weasels, for example, it is the custom to keep the eyelids open while asleep. The rough-shelled snapping turtle carries the matter of indi-

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vidualism of its members just one step farther than does any other form of active life that I can name. We humans somehow manage to survive and keep going after we chance to lose a finger, leg or arm, but not following decapitation, or complete dismembership of the bodily structure, as does this turtle.

In my boyhood my mother related to me how my uncle, on her side of the family, brought home one day a twenty-five pound snapper, and, after preparing the flesh incased within its shell for turtle soup, left lying in the barnyard the head with its dragon-shaped jaws still snapping in self-defense. The next morning when he went there to serve breakfast to livestock, hogs and poultry, he discovered one poor unfortunate duck with its head in the firm grip of that old turtle's jaws.

At the time I was just a bit incredulous, but not so, very many years after listening to her narration, when opportunity came to me to observe something along the same line on my own account. Having captured a good-sized snapper, I brought it home and proceeded to chop off its head, and then split top and under shell apart, and removed the meat, including heart and liver, and put it on the dairy shelf for next day's soup. When on the morrow I went down cellar for it, I noticed the heart, all by itself, beating away with the slow regular pulse rate so characteristic of all the turtle tribe. The head, still lying where I had left it in the grass beside the cornrick, responded to my advances, though very weakly, having been separated from the body too long to grasp the stick I touched it with.

On the lower slope of the hay field east of the barn a tile drain comes out, and it has always been a favorite wintering place for garter snakes. When in early spring the ground thaws out, the ice water from that tile drain forces the snakes to emerge before their regular time of arising. There in the balmy sunshine they lie, slowly thawing out, but unlike the more cautious or lucky members of their tribe, who choose for winter quarters dry gravel bank or seam in granite ledge, they are unable to go back to shelter when twilight threatens. On more than one occasion, when leaving my afternoon's work of fence repairing, and crossing the field toward the barn, I have observed half a dozen or more of them, some with head and neck, others with three-fourths of their length, just pliable enough to squirm.

On the morning after, some of them have rear sections of their anatomy nibbled away by mole or field shrew during their nocturnal forage for nourishment, these greedy little hunters apparently having avoided contact with the snake's threatening jaws. As the day grows warmer, the serpent's head and the front portions of its body wake up, and, evidently quite unconscious of the injury inflicted on its rear members, it endeavors to squirm forward among the stubble in search of breakfast; but being entirely dependent on the cooperation of its sections, fore and aft, for locomotion, it is utterly unable to move, and must just lie there where it is till crow or hawk catches sight of it and puts it out of misery.

The tongue in mammal, bird and reptile is specialized and selfish and difficult to control at times. The office it holds is exacting in its requirements of quick decision as to taste and flavor of whatever is to be passed along to the digestive apparatus, but too often personal enjoyment overbalances unprejudiced decision, and sugar and candy, ice cream, coffee and liquor (to name just a few on the list) not infrequently lead on to disobeyance of orders from the commanding officer. Just as is only too often the case among domestic animals, when horse or cow manages to free itself from halter or stanchion and then, unfastening the door between stable and grain room, overfills itself with a much too concentrated diet, which may even prove fatal in spite of all the veterinary's efforts to cure them.

The position of commanding officer is none too easy a one at best. During the long months of winter and early spring we look eagerly ahead to the approaching summer when we may dive and swim in fresh water pond or briny ocean waves, yet when that time arrives we may safely count on finding our lower members reluctant and obstinate in their refusal to stand the chill after the long series of warm baths in the tub.

And so at last we come round to the same conclusion regarding the individual as with the group. Orders from above should be obeyed for just so long as they are not carried so far as to weaken the individual's self-reliance to the point of utter helplessness.

After the Crisis

Wild beauty of the London chimney-pots
Tangling their ravelings of vapor with the torn cloud-drift,
Above the high nurseries where the rosy-cheeked children
Have stepped from paintings by Romney, Reynolds and Gainsborough.
They have played all day in the dim, iron-guarded gardens.
Below, the black-and-white automatons, the parlor-maids
Murmur, "Yes, Madam," "No, Madam."
Madam, herself, pours tea from the high-swinging Georgian tea-pot,
And to her circle praises the great Neville Chamberlain;
"Only fancy—if he had not gone! But he saved England, saved London."
A cold draught from a corridor blows the blue flame of the spirit-lamp.
She shivers, and to herself question,
"Saved London, saved England! I wonder."

ANNA MCCLURE SHOLL.

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Debating the Outstretched Hand

By CHARLES OWEN RICE

A FORM letter from Communist party headquarters peeped rather innocuously from the litter on my desk one day last summer. It was an invitation to buy and distribute to my friends copies of Earl Browder's "Message to Catholics." Some time before at the Catholic Radical Alliance we had received a request to permit a Communist to talk to us on the "outstretched hand." It seemed time to take notice of the campaign the local Comrades were waging in the Pittsburgh area to win converts and sympathizers among Catholics. We did not think that many Catholics would be ensnared, but still even one soul is worth putting up a battle for. The statement of Cardinal Verdier on behalf of the Pope was being twisted around. Certain other declarations of prominent Catholics were being taken out of their context. A definite, unequivocal statement was necessary. If it were made by those enjoying a good reputation among "liberal" elements, so much the better.

At the next meeting of the Catholic Radical Alliance we agreed to send a challenge for a debate to the local party headquarters. We had in mind at best a cosy little cat and dog fight before a hundred people or so, which would enable us to get a few sticks of propaganda in the secular press. It was my conviction that the Comrades would decline. Arnold Lunn had a difficult time getting them into the same ring as himself last year. Then they postponed and postponed and finally sent a substitute in place of Browder, their chosen champion.

It still would be worth while to issue the challenge, get their refusal, and publish the correspondence. Maurice Sullivan, an able CRA member, dropped in on me the next day, and composed the challenge while I was over in church officiating at Benediction. Maurice did a good job on the letter. When I got back I signed it and we sent it. The suggested topic of debate was: Resolved, A Catholic cannot accept the outstretched hand of Communism.

Lo and behold! by return mail came an answer from Martin Young, local Communist leader, agreeing to the debate and inquiring as to when we might get together to pick sides, place, date, etc. Then I began to wonder if perhaps we had not been a bit too smart. What would the authorities say, etc.? But, by this time, it was too late to worry, so I called up Young.

"I'll send out our Tom Meyerscough, Mr. Rice," said he, "at your convenience."

We arranged a date for Meyerscough to come to the rectory. Tom turned out to be a nice chap—a middle-aged Englishman, who played soccer here when he worked in the mines. He was a fallen-away Catholic but was very pleasant and respectful. Tom suggested that we have one man on a side. He presumed I would represent the CRA. I agreed somewhat fearfully as I had been in hope that I would have Father Hensler, co-founder of the CRA, and his erudition by my side as I went over the top.

"Whom do you want for an opponent, Father?" He really said "whom"; Tom is that sort.

"Oh! Anyone at all, Tom."

"How would Browder suit?"

I must have sputtered like a radio comedian registering surprise, for Tom smiled his bland, interested, indulgent smile and waited for me to speak. I gulped that he would suit perfectly, and there we were. Since we were dealing in big stuff, nothing would do us but Carnegie Hall. Tom, an old campaigner, suggested that I approach the management out there, the dear souls on the board of directors being rather allergic to Communists.

The contract for the hall was signed and the first publicity trickled into the newspapers. A day later a call came in from Carnegie Hall. It appeared that the directors were having well-bred fits and the manager wanted to know if you could not take the debate somewhere else. I agreed to move to another hall if we could arrange it.

In the course of the conversation something priceless turned up. Upon inquiring why the board objected to Browder debating me in Andy Carnegie's hall, while a year before they did not mind his debating Lunn, I was informed that a certain distinguished cleric in a fashionable church, who has long looked askance at the CRA, was consulted.

"What did he say?"

"He said that Lunn was so redoubtable an antagonist that Browder would have been able to do no damage, and get away with no propaganda."

"Why did you not consult him about me?"

"We did." Cough, silence, change of subject.

The Community Forum was only too glad to sponsor us at Schenley High School Auditorium. So we were able to relieve the Carnegie Hall people of the dreadful necessity of presenting two radicals, one Communist, the other Catholic, between whom in the eyes of decent, comfortable people there was little to choose.

During the negotiations the Communists and I were awfully polite to one another. As a matter of fact I have always found the Comrades courteous. Even when I had just finished denouncing Communism before a union crowd they would

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smile sweetly, albeit sadly at times. Only once did any bitterness creep in.

I was down at their book store getting a supply of literature for my pre-debate study. This was, by the way, very necessary for I found that my concentration on the positive side of the fight for social justice had left me woefully ignorant of things about Communism that the average Catholic study clubber knew by heart.

As I was browsing, attended courteously by a very nice colored salesman, a Comrade whom I had helped kick out of the presidency of a local union, AFL by the by, happened in. "Ha!" he ha-ed. "You've let yourself in for something this time." A gentle ripple of laughter from the bystanders left me rather embarrassed. I thought of several squelches after he had gone.

Tom Meyerscough in our conferences never failed to impress upon me the necessity of conducting the whole affair upon a high plane. It was really too funny to reflect that the Catholic Radical Alliance had so well stolen Communist thunder that the Comrades were a little dubious of our respectability. A good sign I thought.

In spite of all the sugar, my delving into Communism's beliefs and history left me closer to their definition of a Red Baiter than I had ever been. Particularly did my researches into their tactics in the United States strengthen my determination to oppose them by every legitimate means to hand, in the spirit of Christian charity fo course.

One of Pittsburgh's right-wing Socialists called me one day and volunteered help. I was given a sheaf of documentary evidence that was and will continue to be invaluable. The average Catholic would be amazed to know the sincere intensity of the opposition such people feel to Communism. What revolts them particularly is the deliberate unethicality of Communist procedure and its absolute lack of respect for truth. It is one thing to say that the Communists will use any means, even lying, cheating, double dealing, to gain their ends. It is another to be able to document this statement from the recent history of the American labor movement. Communism in the U. S. has been behaving for five years or more, though actually it is the same, and its present, nearly decent, conduct is only a passing phase. In the labor movement today the party "line" happens to be the right and sensible line. However, this is so not out of regard for American labor, but out of regard for Soviet Russia. Cooperation with progressive legislation and labor unionism, at the moment, suits the Commissars. As soon as it ceases to do so, it will be scrapped.

The surprisingly large number of recent converts to Communism in the United States can be explained by this present good behavior. The influence of Communism here is now many times stronger than ever before. The turn over—leakage, shall we say?—of Communist membership has in the past been terrific. It will be terrific again. When the party leaders shift from their present line of cooperation with decent forces to their old line of sabotage and opposition, we may be sure they will lose three-fourths of their members and fellow travelers. Even today they have considerable leakage; it is hard to stomach many things they do in inner circles and underground.

Among those fooled by the present tactic are really clever people who think they see a sort of evolution working in Communism and making it beneficent. The battle-scarred old-line Socialists are not being fooled, they know their labor history too well. Also they know that the gang at the top of the party in the United States is still the old gang that has demonstrated truly amazing ability to stomach anything and stop at nothing that suits Moscow. Their past record stinks to high heaven. Today, for all the cooperativeness and respectability of the Comrades there is plenty of skullduggery going on in the background. A lot of ugly things go on in the circles in New York where they are strong, especially in unions. Even among themselves they do quite a bit of shady stuff. An uncorrected report of a Communist caucus held in Pittsburgh a few years ago is a revelation. I have a copy in my possession. There is an amazing quantity of espionage and counter-espionage going on both inside and outside the party.

It is well for the Catholic to note that the Spanish question is no touchstone for distinguishing the Communist from the non-Communist. Virtually all the progressives, let alone the leftists, outside the Church are rabidly anti-Franco and pro-Loyalist. Many of them consider Communist agreement in this matter a distinct handicap. Most interesting is it to know that, they say, the Communists in Left Spain have spoiled things and hurt the government considerably. One can get nowhere with them on this issue, but I always let them know that one could regard Franco as something less than Lucifer and still not be a Fascist. They are as subjective, unreasoning and prone to see only black and white, on this question particularly, as any reader of the *Sunday Visitor*.

Socialists were not the only people who helped me. Early in the game I bleated for help to a number of distinguished Catholic scholars of national rating and they all came through splendidly. Come debate time October 10, I was a walking arsenal of all manner of fact, quotation and opinion.

LESS than two weeks before the big event the local Comrades were horribly embarrassed when Earl Browder really had to go to Paris. The Czechoslovak situation was at its hottest and party heads from all over the world were called into conference. So many people were convinced that Earl had run out on Lunn and would run out

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on me, that the Communists were determined he would put in an appearance. They wanted postponement, but it was not possible. They procured Clarence Hathaway as a substitute. Hathaway, *Daily Worker* editor, is a heavyweight in his own right, but we were all disappointed.

Clarence was just as affable as the other Communists I had run into. He had been raised a Methodist, and was just like any other small town boy who had made good in the big time. A nice fellow, but decidedly one of the old guard, who had survived the Lovestone purge.

We had an overflow crowd. Twenty-five hundred had jammed themselves into the auditorium, others perched precariously on window ledges outside. Five hundred were turned away. Generally in such debates in Pittsburgh and I suppose elsewhere, the supporters of the Leftists are greatly in the majority. As we stepped on the platform one after the other at a brief interval, from the volume of applause it was apparent that this time it was very much the other way. Fully two-thirds of the people were there to cheer the priest, right or wrong. I'm positive it was a Catholic crowd because it turned out later that the collection was very poor for such a multitude.

Hathaway spoke first and was conciliatory. He was just begging for understanding and sympathy between Catholics and Communists. When it came my turn, however, I sailed in. I let it be understood that there was no prospect or possibility of Catholics and Communists cooperating, now or ever, unless Communism ceased to be Communism. I quoted the Pope and other authorities.

I spent time giving the Church's positive program and achievements in the field of social and economic justice, insisting they were not things of today or yesterday, but went back to the very beginning. Hathaway's bow to my "liberal" record was a big help, and put him in a hole. Present persecution of all religions in Russia and the unsavory record of Communism in American labor were other points I dwelt on. My conclusion was that not only Catholics but all persons in their right mind would refuse any "united fronting" with Communism. Rebuttal and question-answer periods followed the same tack, with Hathaway starting pleasant and smiling but ending impassioned and more than a little angry.

There were no fights. There was a regrettable tendency to boo on the part of, I suspect, my parishioners; lots of lusty cheering pro and con and it was over.

Myself and friends went home happy and convinced that the Comrades had been worsted. According to the *Daily Worker* they felt that we had been licked, so we were all satisfied. Or were we? A return engagement at a small town up the river was scheduled for December, but was later postponed. Maybe, after all, we did win.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

AN OPEN letter to the Editors of the *Nation:*

Dear Sirs: In your issue for January 7 you present your annual "list of American individuals and organizations deserving honorable mention for their activities during the preceding twelve months," and on that "honor roll," as you quaintly describe it, you cite "The Editors of THE COMMONWEAL, Catholic weekly, for giving expression to the democratic loyalties of rank-and-file American Catholics." As one whose name is printed on the editorial page of THE COMMONWEAL, as its founder, and now its "special editor," although no longer actively associated with its direction, I must promptly and firmly decline what you no doubt quite sincerely deem to be an honor, and request you, in the interests of fair journalism, to acquaint your readers of that fact, by publishing this letter, preferably, since the letter contains my reasons for an action which unless justified by these reasons will seem merely churlish.

Speaking briefly, my main reason is the conclusion I feel compelled to draw after studying what you say about THE COMMONWEAL, and the Catholic Church, and the hierarchy of the Church, in the same number of the *Nation* (January 7). These remarks, to which I shall allude below, are similar in import to many others which you have published at other times. They seem to me to bear concurrent and consistent evidence of a policy which you, and other "left-wing" publications and organizations, and individuals, notably the Communists, but including also those who without being members of that party are nevertheless willing to be allied with its policy, are now acting upon, namely, to do all you possibly can to separate American lay Catholics from their bishops. The latter, which means the Church itself as well, for without the bishops there could be no such entity as the Catholic Church, you condemn in season and out of season—you insinuate and assert that they, and as a consequence, the Church, are "reactionary," anti-democratic, allied with Fascism.

For example, on page 25, in your editorial, "Father Coughlin and the Church," you say: "Mr. Roosevelt is the only one among the statesmen of the West to raise his voice firmly against Hitlerism, a movement profoundly anti-Catholic and anti-Christian, yet it is no secret that most of the American Catholic hierarchy is opposed to him and did their best in 1936 to spread the impression that he was 'communistic.'" What a wholly preposterous accusation! How could you possibly support it—not to say reasonably prove it, for that would be impossible? Long before President Roosevelt had spoken out against Hitlerism, the Pope, who is a statesman as well as an ecclesiastic, had condemned the root evils of Hitlerism. Are you maintaining that the American hierarchy (so many of whom had spoken out against Hitlerism also before Mr. Roosevelt did) don't know or don't care about what the Pope

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thinks and says about the heresy of racialism, and the fundamental wrongness of all forms of the absolute state, or the absolute race, or the absolute party, or class, or church, and are so "reactionary" (whatever you may mean by that word, which is meaningless unless you say what the bishops are reacting from) that they oppose the Pope as well as the President?

In another place in the *Nation,* page 21, in commenting upon the article by Reverend William C. Kernan you very properly commend its author for offering documentary proof for his assertions that Father Coughlin made gross misstatements of fact in the radio speeches in which, according to you, Father Coughlin "attempted to pin on the Jews the responsibility for Communism"—although Father Coughlin did not do that, not in the speeches I heard: he accused "atheistic Jews," and exempted others. I bear no lance for Father Coughlin's latest speech much as I have honored him for his efforts to promote social justice; for I agree with Monsignor Ryan, and join with his opinion of the harmfulness of Father Coughlin's methods. And these are the same bad methods which you, the editors of the *Nation,* employ against the Catholic Church, and its hierarchy, or at least "most of the American Catholic hierarchy," to use your words exactly.

You offer no proof, documentary, or logical, or any sort. You appeal to prejudice solely. You spread suspicion and distrust and hatred for the leaders of the Catholic Church in this country, while by praising and publicizing individual Catholics, laymen or priests, or, occasionally, even a bishop, for some utterance or other which you approve of, and by constant references to "liberal" or "progressive" or "democratic" Catholic individuals you do your best—or, rather, your worst—to drive a wedge between the bishops and the leaders, or the masses, of the laity.

If a bishop says or does something that seems to you opposed to the common good, in government, or social relations, or cultural concerns—or a group of bishops, or all the bishops—of course you, as journalists, should say so, and attack what is said or done. But you should offer documentary or readily accessible evidence, or proofs, of your charges. You should not offer mere suppositions, or guesses, still less the vapors of prejudice, the rank growths of whispering campaigns of slander and bad will, if you expect to be considered journalists acting up to what ought to be the canons of honor and responsibility of a free press, and, therefore, entitled to dispense honors in journalism to others. I for one do not believe that in your treatment of the bishops of my Church you have observed the canons of honorable journalism.

I may add that few journalists now practising in this country, whether they are Catholics are not, no matter what religious belief, if any, they may hold, have more often publicly written and spoken in opposition to Hitlerism, and all other forms of government or philosophy which deny human liberty, than myself. I do not say that I exerted much influence—Catholic journalists generally do not; but for what it is worth I spoke out my conviction: which was taught to me by my Church; specifically by those who are teachers in my Church, the bishops, and more specifically, by the bishops in my own country, the United States. I know, if the *Nation* does not, what the doctrinal instructions of all our bishops since Carroll down to those now holding that sacred office which is the very source of human dignity, liberty and progress, have taught to American citizens. So do American Catholics generally. So do an ever-increasing number of American non-Catholic citizens.

I advise the *Nation* to give up tactics which have failed during twenty centuries and shown no signs of meeting permanent success; although, as in Mexico, Spain, Austria and elsewhere, they may cause temporary trouble, and spill innocent blood.

Communications

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editors: New York City is going in for vocational schools in a big way. There are over twenty-five vocational schools already; these are being much ballyhooed; and many more are planned. We can see and hear all about us a growing opinion that the vocational school is the panacea for our sick educational system.

But what are the facts?

(a) Those who are teaching and working in the vocational schools know that in fact they are merely the dumpheap for those pupils who do not make good in the academic schools either for reasons of discipline or scholarship.

(b) The training that our pupils receive in the vocational schools is not sufficient for making them real craftsmen in their particular trades.

(c) There is a general feeling amongst teachers and pupils that the great majority of the latter will not find jobs in the trades they were supposedly trained for.

(d) The vocational pupils are compelled to take certain academic courses which are considered in step-child fashion by pupil, teacher and administrator; and, hence, are a cause of much waste of time and energy and a heap of disciplinary problems.

(e) The vocational schools are hotbeds of disciplinary problems because of the general anti-school attitude of the pupils.

(f) Equipment and facilities are woefully lacking in the vocational schools causing great inadequacy in the actual training process.

The one great cause for the situation described above is the lack of a philosophy of vocational education. It is insufficient to say that we must supply that kind of school for the boys and girls who are anxious to learn a trade in order to be able to start making a living when they reach the age of sixteen or seventeen. First of all, we know that boys and girls of the ages from fourteen to seventeen are too young to be trained in the trades, except it be in the actual practises of industry itself. Secondly, we know that the economic system today cannot absorb our trained youngsters. Thirdly, training youngsters for

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industry without a scientific determination of the corresponding needs of economic life is futile. Fourthly, training youngsters in trades is giving them an entirely erroneous conception of what life as a worker in modern society really entails.

Vocationalizing the minds of our pupils is warping them in personality and in citizen-efficiency. Our adult workers today are not mere robot-slaves. They are men and women keenly interested in the multiplicity of modern problems; in other words, they are cultured people in the sense that they are sensitive to the various economic, political and social questions of the day. We are therefore wrong when we build vocational schools as such. The demands of living require more than a vocation; they require the attitudes which we may describe in the phrase, "the vocation of life."

MICHAEL WOOLF.

THE ENCYCLICALS AND EPIC

Pittsburgh, Pa.

TO the Editors: I am sorry for the injustice to Mr. Upton Sinclair in my review of his book, "Little Steel," in which I proposed a two-to-one bet that he was uninformed about the social teachings of the Church. It is not the first time I have backed the wrong horse.

The sentence to which I objected was: "Their religion told them that they would earn their corn pone in the sweat of their brows. . . ." Mr. Sinclair explains, in THE COMMONWEAL of January 6, that he was referring not to Christianity but to a perversion of it, fundamentalism.

Nevertheless, I still object to the fashion among present-day writers of blaming religion, even perverted religion, for social injustice. It is bad logic.

Mr. Sinclair, for example, says in his letter, "I do not think anyone who examines that religion (fundamentalism) objectively would question that its tendency is to reconcile the poor to their sufferings in this world and to fix their attention upon hopes in the hereafter."

Now one could write quite accurately that the tendency of all religion, including Christianity, is to reconcile men to their sufferings in this world and to fix their attention upon hopes in the hereafter. If it doesn't do that, it isn't religion. But Christianity teaches also the duty of demanding justice.

I don't know about fundamentalism. But I do doubt that religion is the chief, or even an important cause of the poverty of Mr. Sinclair's "poor whites." I think religion comforts them, binds up their wounds, dries their tears. But I believe also that it strengthens them in the struggle for justice, by teaching them what justice is and why they have the right to it as human beings and who is on their side in the contest. No Christian nation has ever yet submitted to slavery, not even a nation in which Christianity was perverted. Our closest approach to it today is in the one nation that has officially rejected not only a distorted Christianity, but God Himself.

I am not defending myself. But somehow I suspect that to Mr. Sinclair the hereafter is not quite as real as, say, corn pone. I think he has still to learn the true depths of Christianity. I confess that he wins his two-hundred-to-one bet that I am not familiar with his books touching on religion. But I will wager one thousand to one that he cannot investigate the Catholic Worker movement without becoming so enthusiastic as to produce the best book of his career.

JOSEPH A. BREIG.

THE JEW AND TWO REVOLUTIONS

Glenbrook, Conn.

TO the Editors: I regret having "pained" Mr. Gottfried Kleuber so deeply that nothing would relieve the agony save a communication to your columns of January 13. It has been none of my purpose, in the paper to which he refers, to write a disquisition on the Center party. I merely wanted to emphasize, for the benefit of those who easily forget such things, that friendly relationships existed between German Jews and German Catholics even in the outward expression of political principle. But still my ignorance is not so obtuse as he assumes.

The points at issue are these: first, whether the Center party can properly be referred to as Catholic; second, whether it is proper to speak of Catholic civic activities of 1848 and the years up to 1870 as in any way related to this party.

The answers are these. It is true that the Center never considered itself "confessional." If it had, it obviously could not have put up a Jewish candidate. The implications of its basic "Christian view of life" were often debated, just as were those of the quondam Calvert Associates, organized in consonance with much the same theory. Some (especially younger members like F. Kuehr) held that a "Christian outlook" could only be a "Catholic outlook." Others, especially A. Stegerwald in his Essen Speech, held that it meant an ethical standard of political action which Catholics and Protestants could accept alike.

The classic compromise is therefore doubtless that of Professor Friedrich Dessauer who wrote (in "Das Zentrum," page 8-9): "Is, then, the Center party Catholic in essence? Yes and no. The idea, the underlying plan, make it—*de jure*—a political party the gates of which are open to all fellow-citizens . . . *de facto,* however, the party is predominatingly constituted of Catholics." It is in the *de facto* sense that my adjective, the significance of which ought surely to have been apparent, was employed. It remains to add that I hope Mr. Kleuber will concede that Professor Dessauer was not exactly an isolated figure. If not, I shall be happy to quote further.

Second, the Center party was not, could not, be organized as an imperial party until the Empire was founded in 1870. Yet no authority I have ever read—not Bachem or anybody else—has ever denied the historic continuity which binds together the earlier Catholic struggle for political and social emancipation with the party which entered the Reichstag constituted by Bismarck. The party has hitherto been, so far as its literature and its leaders are concerned, proud of those beginnings. If Mr. Kleuber dissents, the burden of proof is upon him.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

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Points & Lines

Who Supports Rearmament?

FOR THE next few weeks Congress will be busy discussing the various administration proposals drastically increasing the nation's armaments during the next two years. According to the ever-present Gallup poll Americans are heavily in favor of spending for defense. So much so that *Newsweek,* commenting on the various announcements of plane construction, training of pilots and other spectacular preparedness threats preceding the President's first speech, went so far as to say:

> The storm of pacifist-isolationist protest that most certainly would have greeted such announcements a few years ago, by this week had not risen above a few stray whispers.

Curiously enough the two groups that are most wholeheartedly behind the wholesale stepping-up of armaments already advocated in a general way by the President are the ultra-conservatives and the Stalinist wing of the Communist party, although certain Republicans in Congress are said to be viewing the whole thing with a healthily sceptical eye. The New York *Herald Tribune,* for instance, which loudly laments present and imminent national deficits, greets the President's opening message:

> We agree so heartily with President Roosevelt's eloquent defense of democracy and with his plea for rearmament that it seems to us a national tragedy that he should attempt to use these ideals and their safeguarding in what we can only consider a desperate effort to postpone the New Deal's inevitable financial collapse. We are confident that the whole country will applaud the first half of his message. The American people have watched the totalitarian threat mounting against the sky, east and west, and are prepared for decisive measures.

One of the dissenters appears to be Senator Arthur Capper (Republican) of Kansas, who declared that Congress would take its time, examine defense proposals carefully and in all probability reduce them considerably.

> "The Seventy-fifth Congress increased preparedness appropriations 20 percent. An increase of another 50 percent seems to me entirely unjustified."

Another is progressive Republican, newly-elected Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio, who saw in the President's message the recurrence of a most disastrous possibility:

> The logical conclusion is another war with American troops sent across the ocean.

The *Daily Worker* in its general enthusiasm for the President's opening message had little specific to say about the rearmament sections. But an earlier issue indicates why it favors a course of wholesale rearmament. Commenting on a joint peace program made public in Washington, it says:

> The strategy of the spokesmen for an isolated defenseless American democracy, an easy target for fascist objectives, has been made public. . . . When a bill of particulars for increases in the various branches of the defenses of this country is presented to Congress we ask: "Armaments for what?" And if the people are convinced that the answer is, "For the defense of the liberty and independence of the nation," the answer should be emphatically, "Yes!" And it is within the power and duty of the people to take every step for guaranteeing that armaments provided for such specific purpose will be used for no other.

The *Workers Age,* organ of the Lovestoneite branch of the Communist movement, decries this line of their Stalinist contemporary, partly on the grounds that it would not work out that way:

> We are asked to support the administration's gigantic rearmament plan in order to protect the Americas from the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis. Is there not every reason to fear that tomorrow those very same arms, for which we are urged to vote today, will be used as they are now being used in Czechoslovakia and France [i.e., to break strikes, suppress labor, etc.]? Is American democracy any more sacred and inviolable than French and Czechish democracy? . . . Under present-day conditions you cannot trust any capitalist government with arms, no matter how "liberal" and "democratic" it may be.

The *New Republic* of late has consistently questioned this drive for more armaments. And the *Nation* makes this cogent practical objection:

> The idea of a more than fourfold expansion in our air strength seems pretty fantastic either as a measure for the defense of these shores or as a means of sobering Hitler and Mussolini. No military expert has ever suggested that the former purpose requires a fleet of such a size and since it could hardly reach the blue print stage for many months, it is doubtful whether the dictators would be seriously deterred from their purposes.

A more general reaction to the arms proposals is noted from the Baltimore *Sun:*

> We are living in a world in which force—sometimes naked, immoral force—is the most potent of national arguments. . . . We must take the steps to defend ourselves which such a world implies. But the steps we take should be rational steps, based upon as careful a study of the factors at work as we can make. They should not be based upon the opinions of one man, even when that man is as important and persuasive a man as the President of the United States. They should not be based solely upon the opinions of the experts of the Army and Navy. The experts should be consulted, of course, for they can often tell better than laymen what armament is needed to implement a given policy. But they should not make the policy or be permitted to assume that they can.

The *Sun* maintains that the final decision should rest with Congress. Paul Leach notes hopefully in the Chicago *Daily News:*

> The coolness amounting almost to hostility in spots on the House floor, which greeted President Roosevelt's plea for a greatly augmented national defense against dictators, indicated clearly enough that he will have to prove his case to the new Congress.

Happily some of the "few stray whispers" referred to above come from the American Catholic press, which is not commenting very widely on this problem. According to an editorial in the Buffalo *Echo:*

> Beware of preparedness! We Americans should insist that our natural defenses buttressed with reasonable armaments shall suffice to keep inviolate our own soil. Beyond this, let us take these billions, if money must be spent, for renovating and remodeling our own democracy. No better way can be found both to prevent the successful invasion of

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these foreign ideologies we so rightly fear as well as making American democracy truly Christian, American and democratic. Rebuild our industrial oligarchy into a true corporate structure of Christian solidarity in which man and not profits is the center and human welfare and not material prosperity is the goal of all our economic activity.

The *Catholic Tribune* of St. Joseph, Mo., says:

Undoubtedly our country should have a much larger air fleet. It has become evident since the Munich conference that the huge German air armada was a decisive factor in that gathering. Our army and navy should be adequate to meet all attack on either the Atlantic or Pacific coast. But this would seem attainable without the expenditure of seven billions in addition to the annual appropriation of over one billion.

The Jesuit weekly, *America,* said around Christmas time:

If the experience of the ages proves anything, it proves that when a nation prepares for war, it takes the first step not to peace but to the battlefield. It is fairly clear that half a dozen foreign nations are increasing their armaments with but one aim, and that aim is war, not peace. Why are we asked to follow their example? What enemy is at our doors? What fleet menaces our peaceful shores?

"Playing with Loaded Dies"

AMERICAN opinion on the Dies investigation seems to be remarkably simple-hearted, if the reaction of the press is any indication. There are those who love the committee and all its works, flat-footedly and without compromise. The Brooklyn *Tablet* supplies a good sample of this line:

No Congressional Committee in modern times has performed such a distinguished service for the country as the Dies Committee investigating un-American activities. Although meagerly financed and blindly opposed by some government officials and Red-propaganda papers and organizations, the committee has rendered a report whcih makes every genuine American its debtor. The report is summarized elsewhere in this issue of the *Tablet.*

We have asked all local congressmen to continue the committee and its great American work. We cannot indorse it too highly. Its critics have indirectly performed this task.

Then there are those to whom the committee is beneath contempt and a menace to all good things. One would expect the *Daily Worker* (Communist) to fall in this category:

Plainly, the Dies Committee itself is at the head of the list of un-American agencies, precisely because it has sought to shield the fascist enemies of the country. It is one outfit of stormtroopers that the people should see that Congress demobilizes and disperses at this session. Its treasonable activities indicate clearly that to sit idly by while it viciously attacks labor and progressives including the Communist party, is to court disaster for American democracy. Let every congressman hear from home.

In between these extremes most opinion seems neatly to reside. Thus the *Christian Century* (liberal Protestant) finds that un-American activities "do need investigating," and adverts to "the activities of foreign agents in the United States, or, more generally, the operation of forces, whether fascist or communist, that are inimical to the American system of government." But this paper takes serious objection to the methods used by the Dies Committee on the ground that it has "listened to the whispers of slanderers, the confidences of rumor-mongers and the stump speeches of enemies of the administration." *America* emphasizes the necessity for the committee's investigation:

Dies Committee investigations, though they are ridiculed by Reds, Pinks and Mauves, have done the country an important service. They have pointed out to the American public the definite trend of certain organizations of foreign nationals. . . . Let these strangers not forget the benefits of peace and liberty and comfort that their adopted country has afforded them, and be grateful. By all means let them continue to perpetuate the culture of their native land, but show their gratitude by driving the political agitators out of their midst.

The *New World* (official organ of the Archdiocese of Chicago) has consistently objected to the unjudicial and prejudicial way in which the committee has conducted its hearings. Thus when it was stated that James Roosevelt gives little or nothing to the support of his church, the *New World's* comment was: "Dubbing such statements testimony is a travesty."

Meanwhile, in spite of the partizan and bitter attacks on the New Deal which the committee listened to as evidence, it would seem that the President has somewhat modified his attitude toward the committee. Ironically enough, the Department of Justice under Attorney-General Frank Murphy (viciously attacked in a committee hearing) is to investigate the charges contained in Mr. Dies's report. Secretary "playing-with-loaded-dies" Ickes at the last moment canceled a speaking engagement under the auspices of a "fellow-traveler" organization, the American League for Peace and Democracy, which also was attacked in a committee hearing. Representative Dies is asking the new Congress for a two-year continuance of his committee and an appropriation of $150,000.

The editorial which appeared in the New York *Times* states a moderate and sensible view of the whole matter:

. . . The committee has undoubtedly performed a useful and important service. It has helped to make clear for the general public the disingenuous character of Communist tactics in this country. It has shown the hollowness of the so-called "United Front." It has exposed the hypocritical nature of the pretended Communist eagerness to preserve our traditional American democracy. It has shown how Communists have taken control of some organizations to "bore from within," or have formed other organizations ostensibly devoted to broad progressive purposes but really to advance the cause of Communism. . . .

It is important now as never before that American democracy should be alert to the various forms of propaganda and subversive activities that seek to undermine its essential institutions. But it may be seriously doubted that the Dies Committee has shown itself to be an ideal instrument for accomplishing this purpose. The committee has solemnly listened to a great deal of obviously hysterical tosh. Its chairman's conclusions have usually been reached in advance of its evidence, and have nearly always been more sweeping than its evidence justified. It has been genuinely guilty of Red-baiting in the sense of overzealousness to pin a Communist label on every species of liberal thought. It has made silly and vehement charges against several members of the Cabinet. In short, it has sometimes brought itself into deserved ridicule, and in doing so has endangered the very cause to which it supposes itself to be devoted.

While there may be good reason, therefore, for continuing the investigation into un-American activities, there is even better reason why Congress should alter the personnel of the committee charged with that task.

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The Stage & Screen

Mamba's Daughters

THIS play dramatized by Dorothy and DuBose Heyward from DuBose Heyward's novel bears evidence of its novelistic origin. It is episodic rather than organically flowing. Yet by and large it is one of the more interesting dramatic offerings of the season. The separate scenes are moving, even poignant, the characters of Hagar and of Mamba are both admirably limned, and the melodrama itself is atmospheric and often thrilling. Moreover, Ethel Waters gives in Hagar one of the finest pieces of tragic acting New York has seen in years. Miss Waters's picture of the dumb, faithful Negress, whose love for her daughter causes her at the end to kill the man who would destroy her reputation, is a rich addition to the portrait gallery of Negro theatrical creations. It is an impersonation in which the long-suffering of her race is summed up in a magnificent synthesis. In it are pathos, passion, fidelity, all informed wtih an extraordinary dignity. In short, in "Mamba's Daughters" Ethel Waters shows herself a true tragic actress. She is admirably seconded by Georgette Harvey as her almost equally heroic mother, by Fredi Washington as her daughter, by J. Rosamond Johnson as the Negro revivalist, by Willie Bryant as the mulatto gambler, and by Jose Ferrer as Hagar's understanding master, the latter a peculiarly difficult part made vital by Mr. Ferrer's quiet restraint. In fact it is probably the acting and Mr. McClintic's admirable direction which raise the play to a height it does not by itself attain—that is if we are to judge it by the accepted rules of playwriting. But, after all, the only final rule is the rule of dramatic interest and the Heywards' play has this in its separate scenes to a high degree. Despite the melodramatic story the characters have reality and their motivations are admirably brought out. "Mamba's Daughters" is a veritable piece of Americana. (At the Empire Theatre.)

The Gentle People

IRWIN SHAW'S play is a frank melodrama dealing with a Jew and a Greek who are victimized by a Yankee racketeer, and who end by killing him in a boat, dumping his body overboard, and appropriating his wallet. There is the sub-interest of the love affair of the Jew's daughter for the racketeer. It is therefore not a play, such as were Mr. Shaw's former ones, of social meaning. It begins well, with dialogue which reminds one of Clifford Odets, probably because like Mr. Odets's it stems right from the Yiddish drama. Like Mr. Odets's dialogue it is vital and fresh, and the characterization both of Jewish types and of the racketeer is admirable. Unfortunately as the play goes on the tension lessens, and the scenes in the Russian bath and the last one in the boat are preciously near burlesque. But the acting and staging are splendid. Franchot Tone returns to the stage as the racketeer and gives a powerful and varied impersonation, while Elia Kazan proves that he can play other things than gunmen or taxi-drivers, by giving a most sympathetic performance of a sympathetic young Jew. Also deserving praise are Sam Jaffe, Karl Madden, Sylvia Sydney, Lulla David and Roman Bohnen. The Group Theatre has again shown its ability to perform plays of Jewish-American life magnificently. (At the Belasco Theatre.) GRENVILLE VERNON.

"Ring in the new . . ."

BECAUSE this is the time of the year for inventories and because readers of a motion picture column have a right to know where their reviewer stands, I submit my choice of "bests" from the 1938 crop of pictures. The list is not arranged in order of preference; it is not limited to ten; and it includes American and foreign films. The inclusion of certain names does not mean that those pictures had my whole-hearted approval. Without further comment, qualification or apologies, I simply list those pictures I preferred out of the hundreds I saw during 1938: "Grand Illusion," "Boys Town," "The Citadel," "The Adventures of Robin Hood," "Four Daughters," "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," "The Lady Vanishes," "Pygmalion," "The Shopworn Angel," "You Can't Take It with You," "The Edge of the World," "A Man to Remember," "Ballerina," "The Beachcomber," "To the Victor," "Sing, You Sinners," "Algiers," "Generals without Buttons," "Un Carnet de Bal," "Thanks for Everything." And, of course, among the shorts, must be mentioned "Ferdinand, the Bull," and that masterpiece of documentaries, "The River."

Now I wait with bated breath to hear the name that Hollywood will tack onto 1939. If 1938 was "Motion Pictures' Greatest Year," what superlative will the industry think up for this year? None of the current January offerings are world-beaters that suggest supergreatness. "Zaza" is a mild rehashing of the play that once shocked our elders. Definitely dated, it rises above its dull story of love between an actress and a married man only in the touching scene in which beautiful Claudette Colbert meets Herbert Marshall's little daughter, and when Bert Lahr, as Zaza's song-and-dance partner, surprises us by his sincere performance in his first "straight" rôle. "Pacific Liner" comes close to being something outstanding in film fare. Moving slowly, almost plotless, with a "Hairy Ape" touch minus the Eugene O'Neill symbolism, this picture relies on its strong portrayals of the varied personalities in the furnace room for its effectiveness. When cholera breaks out in the hold of the S.S. Arcturus, big, brutal, lusty Victor McLaglen, in his best form as the chief engineer who believes a man should shovel his way to glory, drives his men harder than ever. While ship's doctor Chester Morris fights the dreadful disease which is rapidly killing the stokers, the passengers upstairs, unaware of what is going on below, continue their playing. A fine supporting cast led by Barry Fitzgerald and Alan Hale assist Mr. McLaglen in sweating from Shanghai to 'Frisco. "There's That Woman Again" is one of those humorous-murder-mystery-detective films. Without straining your mental capacity, Melvyn Douglas and Virginia Bruce keep you amused and guessing.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Books of the Day

A King in Court

James I of England, by Clara and Hardy Steeholm. New York: Covici-Friede. $3.75.

THE MODERN educator aims at making the assimilation of knowledge not only painless but pleasant. The contemporary biographer, taking his cue from the educator, attempts to produce a confection so expertly compounded that the reader is aware only of the most pleasureable sensations during the process of mental mastication and digestion. Unless the writer is concerned with a short impressionistic or psychological study, he is at pains to make his work as absorbing as a novel. He gets his characters and his plot from history, but he applies to them the techniques of the novelist. He does not want his reader to feel that he is merely reading a book but that he is actually witnessing the events recorded. He even lets him inside the minds of the characters by employing the device of stream of consciousness. In the hands of a skilful and honest person this kind of biographical writing may be used with excellent results.

In their biography of James I of England Clara and Hardy Steeholm are both honest and skilful. They present a vivid picture of the Scotland and the England that impinged upon the consciousness of James and they treat the development of his personality fully and with sympathy and understanding. Son of Mary Stuart, upon her exile crowned infant king of a realm torn by religious conflict and the quarrels of an unruly and greedy nobility, James grew to manhood in an environment well calculated to leave its searing imprint upon his impressionable mind. He was educated by grim Presbyterian tutors, yelped at and hounded by the ministers of the Kirk, dunned by Edinburgh merchants as he rode along the streets, and throughout his youth was at the mercy of his factious nobles. Yet when he reached maturity he was shrewd enough to reduce these discordant elements to some sort of obedience and order. Outside of a storm-tossed trip to Norway to bring home his bride, Anne of Denmark, there was little of romance in his Scottish experience.

A scholarly man, acutely conscious of the divine nature of his kingship, James longed for peace and security. This he hoped to find in England as Elizabeth's successor. His negotiations to this end the Steeholms tell in a highly dramatic manner. When at last the old Queen relinquished her tenacious grip on life and James left Edinburg for the more congenial climate of London he intended to enjoy the English kingship. But the English kingship was a job to be worked at, not a position to be enjoyed. James had neither the stamina nor desire to give it the attention it required. When his spasmodic efforts brought opposition and failure, he was only too willing to seek escape in the physical exhaustion of the hunt and the intimate comradeship of his son Charles and other young men who had the poise and grace he himself lacked, and on whom he could lavish the loving care which had been denied him in his youth. If James as ruler of England merited the appellation of "the wisest fool in Christendom," given him by Henry IV of France and used here as the book's subtitle, it was due to his Scottish heritage and lack of will rather than lack of intelligence.

All this the Steeholms tell us, and much besides. They are lavish with descriptions of the elaborate ceremonies, costly entertainments and sumptuous banquets enjoyed by James and his court. They follow through the personal and political intrigues which centered around James's person on both sides of the Tweed. Hardly a villain or a hero is omitted in the long series from Bothwell to Buckingham. Underneath this hectic surface of court life flows the undercurrent of the problems of monarchy: parliaments, clergy and statesmen to be broken, conciliated or ignored; foreign policy to be conducted along the lines of peace; a son and a daughter to be married off advantageously to this purpose; and the eternal question of revenue. Particularly instructive, in view of the present situation in Europe, are James's relations with the Papacy and with the English Catholics. Though James wished people of divergent religious beliefs to live at peace with one another, his treatment of the English Catholics illustrates the difficulties to which the members of a religious group may be subjected when they are at the mercy of the political whims of the state.

The Steeholms have given us so entrancing a book that it is perhaps ungracious to suggest that it might have been even better if their probings into the classes of Scottish and English society below the level of the nobility and the hangers-on at court had not been so tentative. The Presbyterian ministers, for example, howl and rant and cause James infinite trouble, but there is little indication that they were speaking for a substantial section of the population who looked to them for leadership and who backed their demands. Again, although Maitland's service as chancellor of Scotland is appreciated, there is no suggestion that his efforts to increase orderliness and efficiency in government had the sympathetic support of the members of his profession, the lawyers. As for England, less space devoted to the royal progresses and more to the progress of the country squire, the city merchant and that ubiquitous fellow, the lawyer, would have provided a clearer idea of James's difficulties with the English than the one presented.

But we must be grateful for what we have. No one familiar with the story will fail to enjoy rereading it in the Steeholms' delightful prose, and the stranger will find an exciting introduction to James and his court.

ALEXANDER THOMSON.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Before America Decides, edited by Frank P. Davidson and George S. Viereck, Jr. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. $3.00.

THE SUBTITLE of this book, "Foresight in Foreign Affairs," gives an insight into its purpose and usefulness. Twelve authorities on international relations contribute chapters to a symposium edited by Harvard students. President Emeritus Lowell sounds the theme, the necessity for planning foreign policies expertly and objectively, doubly imperative for popular governments. Three subdivisions of the book divide the discussion along lines of the world background, the American background, and the issue. The question which must be decided is phrased three ways; internationalism vs. nationalism, collective security vs. neutrality, or planning vs. drifting in American foreign relations.

Obviously in any such formulation of issues, the answers as well as the questions involve a conflict of ideas which may not proceed to the point of being resolved. Though some of the chapters range so widely as to produce confusion in the reader, all of them are provocative of thought.

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Omissions are sometimes as significant as inclusions; this is particularly so in the discussions of Latin-American and Far Eastern policies, which are confined to comparatively recent times, and in the early chapters on world backgrounds which somewhat neglect the Russian factor in modern diplomacy of whatever sort.

Some chapters merit special attention. Samuel Flagg Bemis outlines eight "main trends of American diplomacy" and analyzes the three-point Mahan formula for American policy since 1898. To him the Open Door policy is the "Great Aberration" and the participation of the United States in the World War is the "Strange Interlude" of American diplomacy in the twentieth century. He supports only the third point of the formula, that of predominance in the Caribbean area. When in the future, the United States must plan on having friends, he would advocate that we form an entente cordiale, never an alliance, with Great Britain. The objective and comprehensive chapter by Phillips Bradley on economic forces, treats in accurate detail of the scope and the means for economic planning, if the United States is to attempt any of the alternatives, self-sufficiency, cooperation, or a modified form of withdrawal and permanent affiliations.

Especially productive of argument are the opposing chapters on collective security and neutrality, in which the disputed points are primarily the probability of future wars and of American interest in them, and the question of the relation of force to law. Edwin M. Borchard here expounds his well-known pragmatic views, and presents three approaches to a national policy of neutrality, one of which he favors, while he dismisses collective security as an impossibility; and Clyde Eagleton, taking almost a diametrically opposite stand, insists upon the ultimate consideration of moral and ethical factors in international order.

Philip C. Jessup, relating the organization of the State Department to the functions of planning, suggests the possibility of a Neutrality Policies Commission prepared during peacetime to direct the nation during wartime in the applications of international law, and in the light of possible alternative relationships. Fritz M. Marx ends the book with a discussion of the difficulties incurred by policy makers when dealing with a stratified and rather rigid public opinion on foreign issues, which would prove one of the hardest nuts for policy planners to crack.

Four outstanding statements of American policy are appended, together with an up-to-date series of chapter references and an index. The book should prove useful as a basis for student discussion.

ELIZABETH M. LYNSKEY.

FICTION

Any Day Now, by August Derleth. Chicago: Normandie House. $2.50.

OF THE diminishing flood of "little" magazines which deluged the country during the past fifteen years, by far the best was the *Midland*. Founded and largely edited by John T. Frederick, it is now incorporated with the *Frontier*. There was and is nothing precious about Mr. Frederick, and in the *Midland's* palmy days it maintained a standard perhaps never equaled by any other magazine on this continent. Among the many fine writers he virtually discovered and published was that unique priest and quiet genius, Leo L. Ward. Among them, too, was August Derleth.

I believe it was as a poet that Mr. Derleth made his original impression; certainly he has written some excellent verse, and it is as a poet that he must still be judged despite his work in acceptable prose. Turning to prose, a poet is faced with the problems of a discipline not perhaps more difficult than that of his original medium, but certainly different. He has, usually, a tendency to look down on prose, to think of it as, even at best, something grosser and (in the exact sense) less refined than poetry.

That Mr. Derleth writes a grood prose is witness that he is aware of the true nature of imaginative prose. That he has, in places, shown the usual flaws of the poet writing prose, is probably not more significant than that this is a relatively unfamiliar medium to him.

His story is slight. Renna Gluyk, almost morbidly heedful of her dead mother's wish and command that she marry money, refuses a young doctor and then spends the rest of her life in remorse for her beloved doctor, first married to another woman, then dead. In reconstructing the speech and mores of a Wisconsin town two decades ago, Mr. Derleth is at his best; and in the character of the saloon-keeper, Renna's father, he has given us something exact and alive and worthy of the best prose writers. But Renna remains shadowy as do the others, although that is perhaps what Mr. Derleth wanted, for the dominant emotion of the book is one of nostalgia, and, if he does not always make you believe in his people, he does make you see and smell and hear the Wisconsin whose Germans were so badly torn in 1917.

Mathias Noheimer has done some good symbolic decorations for the story and the binding, typography and format of the book are excellent.

HARRY SYLVESTER.

HISTORY

Flight into Oblivion, by A. J. Hanna. Richmond: Johnson Publishing Company. $2.75.

MR. HANNA'S surprising book, the first to treat its subject in a connected narrative, will attract attention. What is the author's purpose? "To describe a unique episode in the history of the United States, the flight of the Confederate Cabinet . . . as the Confederate Government retreated south following the fall of Richmond." The average, able reader, aided by the professional historians' routine preoccupations, possesses on these Confederate Cabinet members information as shreddy as his knowledge of widgeons.

National and international complications of the present have not dimmed the inquisitive interest in our Civil War era. Like Joseph Le Conte's " 'Ware Sherman" or Cornelia Hancock's "South after Gettysburg," Mr. Hanna's work is rich in personality, richer in the results of research. It answers many historical questions correctly for the first time. What is more important, the book is well planned. Before presenting in detail the movements of Jefferson Davis's official advisers after Lee's surrender, it sketches the condition of the Confederacy in 1865. Public sentiment in the North, the emotional torment of those who sought revenge, as reflected in the press, is part of the background. Until his capture in Georgia a month after Richmond fell, Jefferson Davis enters the narrative in relation to his Cabinet. The fate of the others who were captured quickly takes little time to tell. What gives Mr. Hanna's book distinction is the enormous amount of information on the dramatic flight, pursuit and escape of Robert Toombs, Judah P. Benjamin and John Cabell Breckinridge. These three reached safety; the

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first in Cuba, the others in England. Mr. Hanna has brought back from oblivion the seventeen men who held positions in the Cabinet during the lifetime of the Confederacy.

Quotations from the diaries and letters of the fugitives speak their thoughts of dread, anxiety and determination, while they reveal a sense of humor as invigorating as it is unexpected. Numerous maps, delightful illustrations, notes placed where they do not annoy, and an index worth the space it fills add value to this difficult historical undertaking that succeeds in explaining the lives and careers of a group of honest Americans. DANIEL S. RANKIN.

RELIGION

The Great Heresies, by Hilaire Belloc. New York: Sheed and Ward. $2.50.

THE PLAN of this book is to present to a general reading public in an easy generalized way an inventory of the modes which heresy has and can assume. It is said to be a complete inventory, because the five heresies chosen by Belloc exhaust the general ways in which the "thing" Catholicism can be attacked. They are: the Arian, a change in fundamental doctrine; the Mohammedan, an invasion from without; the Albigensian, a moral cancer from within; Protestantism, the attack on unity; and finally modernism (to Mr. Belloc, the anti-Christ) which is the attack on faith itself. Of the countless heresies against the Church, none but will lie within one of these patterns, says the author. There will be heresy as long as the Church endures, we are assured, because heresy is always an attack by those who hate the Church, upon some essential part of the whole which we call Catholicism. At present the idea of heresy is generally connected with buried doctrinal disputes, having interest only to theologians or antiquarians. Mr. Belloc's purpose is to restore the general awareness of the ever-present and alive issue of heresy in the life of Catholicism.

It is not difficult to find merits and defects in the book. As usual with him, Mr. Belloc never allows you to doubt where he is leading you. He labors heavily and earnestly to reduce the tremendous range of events chosen to his rather simplified pattern. Although it is not always made evident why the sequence occurs, yet there is no doubt at any moment but that he will point out the laws of growth and decline in each heresy as he comes to it. It is almost like an effort to construct a science of heresies and to illustrate it with convenient examples, rather than the more difficult task of interpreting in a more concrete fashion what really happened in each of the five movements. Again, many pages are given either to a repetition of what has been said previously, or to a somewhat irrelevant retailing of historical progress from a highly subjective standpoint.

However, when these things are discounted, certain fruitful ideas remain, which on the whole, make the book worth attention. For so serious an effort at synthesis, upon so vital a topic, cannot but result in many pregnant ideas: to discover that Mohammedanism is essentially a heresy and not a foreign thing; to be reminded of the seriousness of the Albigensian disease (nowadays ompletely ignored); and to contemplate modernism in all its complexity as the arch heresy—namely atheism. These, and many lesser bits of historical wisdom redeem the book, and give it a value for the lay Catholic, in terms of understanding his past and present, and of orientating himself toward the future. JOSEPH MC DONALD.

BLACKFRIARS

The January *Blackfriars* includes a hitherto unpublished essay by the Late Father

BEDE JARRETT, O. P.,

on

THE HOLINESS OF TRUTH

also contributions on

BIOLOGY AND SEXUAL ETHICS
PUTTING ACROSS THOMISM
THE CRITICS' SHELLEY
CATHOLICS IN HOLLAND AND THE MOVIES
LOVE, MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN
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More about Books

Here is something of an innovation in THE COMMONWEAL'S *treatment of current books: a column or two of comment which will appear not weekly but at irregular intervals and which will call attention to a variety of fare which somehow might seem ill-at-ease in the setting of a formal review. Perhaps our readers might give us a hint, from time to time, as to how they like this department, which will conscientiously strive to avoid matters of Contemporary Social Significance.*

I HAVE always liked writings about caves, particularly when the caves involve the spoor of primitive man. But stalagmites and stalactites are good enough if better is not available, and there is some romance to underground rivers which defies analysis. Why should water running under a mountain be more interesting than water running around the same mountain? The strange thing about it is that I also suffer acutely from claustrophobia whenever I actually visit a cave: perhaps that is the fascination of it, the fascination of the serpent's eye. Last fall an American publisher brought out a volume of popular speleology—the science of caves. It seems to have attracted less attention than it deserves, unless my interest in the subject is atypical, which there is reason to believe it is not, judging by the amount of free advertising tourists in these parts every year give to the Howe Cavern of New York State. This volume represents an amalgamation of matter that originally appeared in two French books by Norbert Casteret, one of them crowned by the French Academy. The English version is called "Ten Years under the Earth" (Greystone, $3.00).

M. Casteret is a native of the French Pyrenees who has all his life been devoted to exploring the bowels of the earth; his adventures have that excitement which perennially endows descriptions of acts of genuine daring; it requires considerable imagination to conceive anything much more daring than diving into a subterranean pool under a submerged ledge of rock when one does not know what there may be in the dark beyond. That such risks should be rewarded by discovering the world's oldest sculpture gallery, by enabling geographers to conceive anew watersheds which the geography of the surface had wrongly determined, is what justifies them as more than mere lust for adventure. However one reads about the perils endured by this opener of new lands under familiar landscapes, whether it be to learn more of geology or anthropology or simply because it is all full of exciting escapes from injury or death, his book is good, clean and very healthy fun.

Occasionally a man will so cultivate a hobby that he will come to know more about some tiny patch of knowledge than anyone else living, and then he will write a book about it which may be tough sledding or may be charming reading but will, in any case, represent a contribution to knowledge. Dr. Harry Emerson Wildes seems to have made such a hobby of Valley Forge in a book ("Valley Forge." Macmillan, $3.50) which is assuredly not dull, though it is a bit perfunctory and Victorian in its purple passages on nature. But for this minor fault one can forgive it in view of the new picture it gives us of just what transpired during this winter of our revolutionary discontent that afforded also the training time for our final victory. People—and there are such—who like to feel that they know almost everything about something and like that something to have redeeming human interest will welcome Dr. Wildes's labor of love. To young Americans one is tempted particularly to recommend it; history is a very different and a far more gracious lady in a special study of this sort than she is in a text-book; indeed her personality is often seriously dichotomized if one compares its manifestations in the text-book and in the special study. It is not a bad thing for the young to discover this inevitable dichotomy. Knowing that it exists and why it exists and how one is to choose between one account of events and another helps one to develop a nose for propaganda—a very useful tool in the modern world.

What person who ever experienced it will forget the discovery of "Trivia," "The English Language," "Words and Idioms"? Unfortunately the number of those who have ever had the experience is small and even a decade ago one was forced to think of Logan Pearsall Smith as a faintly esoteric phenomenon. For he is a phenomenon and represents in his person a whole breed of cats—Henry James, Whistler, Santayana, Edith Wharton, Ezra Pound. It is easy merely to label them as expatriate Americans, but there are many kinds of expatriate Americans; if all of them had been of this one variety, America would have ruled the intellectual world. This little group of classic expatriates were and are all of them brilliant men and women far above the ordinary in any country. Perhaps that was their trouble and is their tragedy. Post Civil War America afforded too strong a diet for such men and women; they needed subtler nuances in their victuals, so they unrooted themselves—being happily possessed of the material means to do it—and formed a circle with a flavor all its own which blended well with Oxford and Cambridge and Florence, but which remains always an overtone and never participated fully in any of them. It is almost impossible to write of such men and women without allowing a slight trace of the supercilious to creep into what one says; it is the fashion today to underestimate them and their achievements. Yet these were real and perhaps of as great a value as what was done by those who stayed at home and faced the music, or those who, like Henry Adams, tried to live both ways. Logan Pearsall Smith has written his own apology, "Unforgotten Years" (Little, Brown, $2.50). It is in no sneering spirit that I notice how disproportionate a part of his book deals with the events which led to and the reasons which inspired his emigration to Europe. Even in this book Mr. Smith's achievement is notable, his use of English is as biting and efficient as ever. One gets a thrill merely from admiration at the way he turns a phrase or points a sentence. But his day is not our day nor his life our life. Not only is America too crude for such refinement; the whole world has turned crude; the Horatian days are over. Says Mr. Smith in his last paragraph: "I too like to dance in the light of glowworms, and the earnest and hastily written books of our modern authors are of no interest to me. So I suppose I am an old fogey, after all." The premise one can grant, the conclusion only as proud irony.

A current best seller is "Philosopher's Holiday," by Irwin Edman (Viking, $2.75). The title seems peculiarly apt, for what philosophical talents the author possesses are here neatly neglected in favor of an appealing geniality; a tolerant stoicism tries to pass for wisdom. But so long as a reader has this qualification in mind, he will find the book genial and written with winning charm.

THE SAMPLER.

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The Inner Forum

THE DEMOCRATIC tradition in America goes back for almost one thousand years according to the forthcoming "Unsolved Mysteries of the Arctic," by the noted explorer, Vilhjalmur Stefansson. As early as 990 Erik the Red's colony in Greenland was holding sessions of a congress of some kind, which ten years later voted that the colony become Christian.

In 1124 Greenland was designated as a separate bishopric affiliated first with the archbishopric of Hamburg, later with that of Nidaros, Norway. According to Stefansson, as cited in the January *Natural History:* "At the height of prosperity during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, there were in the Eastern Settlement twelve churches, an Augustinian monastery, a Benedictine nunnery, and about 190 farms; the Western had four churches and some 90 farms. . . . The first premonitions of Greenland's tragedy came in 1261, for in that year Greenland voluntarily ceased to be a republic and affiliated itself with Europe as a province of Norway, with resulting decline in prosperity."

Evidences of this decline are found in contemporary papal documents. Pope John XXI in 1276 recognized the fact that five years would be required for collecting tithes and bringing them back to Norway. Six years later Pope Martin IV advised the Archbishop that the leather and leather rope—all they had succeeded in collecting as tithes—should be sold immediately for whatever it would bring in Norway, despite the fact that the Norwegian market was glutted with these products.

In 1448 Nicholas V wrote the bishops of Iceland about the ravages of barbarians who had laid waste the land, murdered the inhabitants, and left only nine churches standing. In 1492 Alexander VI "gave out a sort of letter of credit" to Bishop Matthias, who set out to revive the Church in Greenland from decades of poverty and neglect. Vincentius, the last of the Catholic bishops, died as a prisoner in the hands of the Lutherans in 1537. And sometime during the sixteenth century the Greenland colony of 9,000 souls, falling victim to disease, attacks of the Eskimos, malnutrition or some other undetermined disaster, completely disappeared. But visible evidences of their notable agrarian culture are considerable.

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